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Hopkins

To a lonely boy.

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TO A LONELY BOY

ARTHUR HOPKINS

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A LONELY
BOY



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TO A LONELY BOY

YOU ARE TO SPEAK no more of being a burden.

Your father was my dearest friend. Your affliction denies you much in life, but somehow I think your greatest deprivation was not to have known him. His death left a great gap in my life which twenty years have but widened. On rare occasions in life we meet persons who seem in some previous life to have been freed from the dross and scale of humanity. These people seem to move in a special light, a shining light. The early painters saw this light, thus the halo. Your father was one of these. He was in the true sense a good man. He recognized evil in no one. He never tried to change anyone. He loved his fellow man and, more than that, respected him. He imposed his will on no one and yet had more

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influence on the lives of those about him than anyone I have known. Yes, he came from a very special place and I am sure went to one.

Now that your mother is gone you must be my son, the son that I never had. What love I have is yours, and what comfort I can bring you will doubly comfort me. I will write to you often of things that have happened to me, of people I have known, of life as it has glanced by me.

How long you will be confined Dr Tanner does not know. Whether you will recover is equally uncertain. This is a truth we both must face and then put behind us. Only thus can we readjust ourselves to a way of life. There are many ways of living, and afflicted people are most ingenious in finding them.

I have a friend, once a famous writer, who has been confined to his room for years. In the early days friends called to sympathize with him, and had the strange experience of finding that they were the ones in need of sympathy—their spirit was so poor in comparison with his. He has kept close track of his friends' activities, frequently counseling them

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and arousing the interest of others in their aspirations. He has found a way of life far more beautiful than he had discovered in his days of vigor.

Is this coincidence? As I am writing my office door is open. A moment ago I heard laughter and looked up. In the outer office was a blind man walking toward me, led by a boy. His face was alive with smiles. It was he who had laughed, not the normal, furrowed auditor, nor the normal, troubled press agent, nor the normal, impatient secretary. It was the blind man. Is this coincidence, or was he sent that I might tell you about him?

You are not lacking in resources. You will find a way of life that is rich. You have your father's courage.

THE BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES will be sent to you today. I envy your being able to enjoy music from the unplayed score. In realizing that you will now have time to study all the great works you have found the first blessing of your new life. It seems that time is the one thing that few of us have no matter what means we employ to save it. When the timesaving mania of modern life reaches its climax there probably will be no time left for anything, the timesaving devices will keep us so occupied. One marvels at how much was accomplished by men in the pre-speed, leisurely age of Thomas Jefferson, for instance, a man who apparently led an unhastened life and in so doing found time to master so many subjects—ancient and modern languages, law, govern-

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ment, architecture, agriculture, horticulture; time for much original thinking and writing; time to help launch and guide a new nation; time to found a university; time to carry on a vast correspondence; time to manage his estate and entertain his friends, yet we picture him as a gentleman with a pair of garden shears enjoying a day in the sun. Apparently it is not speed but rhythm that counts.

I am glad the story of the dream interested you. Yes, there is another one. It happened when I was with the *Cleveland Press* and the story was given me to handle.

A man, about thirty, was found on a bitter winter morning with his forehead and hands frozen to a steel street railway pole. The police freed him and tried to question him, but he was in a daze and was taken to the police station. He was given food and coffee and finally the haze seemed to break, he came to with a start and began to moan "I killed her. I killed my mother." The police could get no more from him until finally he agreed to accompany them to his house. There the woman was found on the floor, choked to death, the room in great disorder.

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The final disclosures and corroborations of the investigation were that the man had been an unusually devoted and industrious son since childhood. He and his mother had always lived alone, and so far as the neighbors knew he had never left his mother except to go to his work. About two weeks before the tragedy his mother was taken ill. He arranged with neighbors to look in on her occasionally while he was at work, and he sat with her during the night, taking only occasional dozes.

Her condition grew gradually worse and his distraction mounted, but he continued working in the day and tending her at night. On the night of the tragedy, as he was finally able to describe it, he fell asleep and awakened with a start. To his horror there was a great serpent on the bed slowly crawling toward his mother's throat. At first he was unable to move, but finally with one leap he seized the serpent behind the head and began to wrestle with it. It put up a great struggle and he was obliged to flail it about the room until finally the beast was quiet and slipped from his hands as he opened them. Exhausted, he laid down on the couch and

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slept for what seemed a long time. Slowly memory of the nightmare returned to him. He looked about the room for the serpent but saw only his mother. He stared at the strangled figure for a long time, and finally realized what had happened. He went out into the cold and placed his burning forehead against the steel telephone pole, and here he was found as though in an attitude of worship.

He was committed to an asylum. Two months later he died. Here was a Freudian tragedy as elemental as *Œdipus*, but in those days Freud was not known in America and the inner meanings of this nightmare were concealed.

It was not until 1912 that I heard of Freud. It was during the production of my first play, *The Poor Little Rich Girl*, a fantasy by Eleanor Gates. We were having a Sunday-night dress rehearsal in Philadelphia. Among those attending was Dr Reginald Allen of the University of Pennsylvania. After the rehearsal he came to Miss Gates and me in great excitement and exclaimed, "This is pure Freud. The application is flawless." Miss Gates and I were rather puzzled, since we hadn't the slightest idea what he was talking about. Upon

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learning this it was his turn to be amazed, but we finally found a common tongue and he invited us to his home where we sat most of the night while he told us of the theories, experiments and discoveries of the great man. I have always regarded it the most fruitful night of my life, as I was immediately fascinated by these interpretations of emotions and from then on read all that I could find on the subject. I have felt ever since that no one doing interpretive work in the theater can really know just what materials he is translating without some understanding of the Freudian principles.

The Poor Little Rich Girl was the story of the child of rich parents whose chief contact was with vicious servants, as vicious to each other as to her. Her nurse, anxious to get away early one evening, gave the child a sleeping draught, which resulted in delirium. In the delirium the servants, her parents, the people with whom she came in contact became actually as she had heard them described. The nurse, "a two-faced woman, dancing attendance," was exactly and did exactly that. The governess slithered through the delirium

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“a shimmering snake-in-the-grass.” Thomas the butler was “all ears,” enormous ears, and in a duel he actually murdered the King’s English, a Tommy, with a parrot on his forearm. Father wearily dragged a money machine following Mother in whose bonnet was a buzzing bee, the society one. An organ grinder who, against her protests, had been driven from the house, now appeared as a gay old guide to unknown places to which she was accompanied by her now living “Teddy Bear.” Robin Hood’s barn was there with people running around it and the doctor frequently announcing her condition to the distracted parents, and finally, as she was pursued into the barn by the “snake-in-the-grass,” “the two-faced one” and “all ears,” rescuing her by pulling her through the window to exultant cries of “He’s pulled her through. He’s pulled her through.” Through all of the phantasy the author quite amazingly projected the actual drama that was taking place, the struggle to save a child’s life.

In getting this play to its performance there were distressing experiences whose amusing side did not appear until

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later. The script had a mad flavor which could easily have been considered silly, and I was an unknown producer in whom no actor could be asked to have faith.

The first act was easily digested, but when we got to that second act the looks of bewilderment on the actors' faces grew to a point of outrage. What were they being asked to do? So actors began to drop out. Succeeding actors followed them. It became a procession, but out of each new batch we managed to retain a few until the cast was finally completed. The one person who seemed to understand the play completely from the beginning was the child. She had had little experience and was being entrusted with a long role which did not seem to disturb her in the least. Her name was Viola Flugrath. Miss Gates, swayed by newspaper recollections, suggested she change her name to Viola Dana, and to this she consented.

After endless difficulties with obdurate trick scenery which depressed the actors still more, we came to the opening performance in New Haven. Before the performance I went backstage, and from the dressing rooms in the men's

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section there floated considerable jeering, topped by one vile prediction as to the fate of the play.

Finally the curtain went up, and from the beginning it was evident that the play was catching on. This so disconcerted the skeptics, who had taken little trouble learning lines, that they began to show marked evidences of panic. Then little Dana came through with one of those exhibitions that is the mark of the thoroughbred actor. She stood firm, carrying the play and giving the faltering ones their lines. She knew them all. Finally morale was restored, the dizzy second act received gales of applause, and at the end of the evening it was obvious that a success had been born. Little Dana had saved the night.

And so, my boy, it sometimes happens that a child shall lead them.

A M GLAD YOU ARE fathoming the splendor that is Dr Tanner. In addition to his rare ability he has the strength of the consecrated. There is nothing of himself that he withholds. This kind of self-surrender leads people into rich paths of intuition and clairvoyance that cannot be charted in books. There are great forces that are deflected by layers of self. Most of us do not come in contact with them. Our aims and desires, too purely personal, have insulated us. In protecting ourselves against the vicissitudes of life we have dammed ourselves against its rich flow. Did the rending of garments by ancient people seeking approach to God have a symbolic meaning? Are the flesh of selfishness and fear the garments we must rend before God's forces can

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reach us? Dr Tanner is more exposed to these forces than anyone I know. Through him much will flow to you. Of that I am certain.

No, I did not begin newspaper work in Cleveland. In fact, I did not begin as a reporter. A friend of ours was made advertising manager of a paper just starting in St Paul, the *Daily News*. He offered me a solicitor's job, and with nothing more definite in mind I accepted. Before long I had to admit that as an advertising solicitor I was a failure, but was not unhappy as I disliked the work. I asked if I might be transferred to the city room, but the glowering editor was not impressed.

After trying the other papers with no success I decided to concentrate my annoyance on the city editor of the *Globe*, a rather decrepit morning paper long since extinct. The editor's name was MacMurchy, and while he was not in the least encouraging, something told me that he was my best chance.

After some desperate weeks and many calls on MacMurchy I stopped in at his office one evening, and found

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him in a rage. His police reporter was on a tear. "Have you ever done police?" he shouted at me. It was no time to say "no." "Then get up to Central Station and see what's doing." So my first job as a police reporter was to find Central Station. With as much nonchalance as I could summon, I stepped up to the desk sergeant and said, "I'm from the *Globe*."

"I'm not surprised," he replied.

"Well, I am."

"You wouldn't be if you'd seen Lindstrom about three o'clock this morning. It took three cops to hold him. He's in a strait-jacket now. What's your name?"

"Hopkins."

"Where you from?"

"I'm from the East."

"Where East?"

"Cleveland."

"That ain't East."

"I guess you're right, but it seems a long way East to me."

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"It's kinda quiet tonight."

"Good."

"Well, stick around. You never know."

At that moment there entered a sullen, sloppy middle-aged man who passed the sergeant with a grunt and went to a long table in the rear.

"Who's that?" I asked.

"Whittick, police reporter on the *Pioneer* twenty years."

"So that's the demon Whittick."

I sauntered back toward the long table. Whittick picked up a phone and said, "Gimme the precincts." (Pause) "Anything doing Mike? All right." (Pause) "Anything doing, Joe? All right." And so on. He then took the city telephone and said, "Gimme the hospitals," got them one by one without hanging up and without any apparent result. He then walked by me and out of the station house.

In a few minutes I did an imitation, taking the police phone, getting the outside precincts; then the city phone, getting the hospitals. There was no news.

I walked back to the desk and asked the sergeant:

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"How often are you supposed to do that?"

"Oh, every couple hours."

"Until when?"

"Two forty-five. Say don't you know when you go to press?"

"I forgot to ask. Where do you suppose Whittick went?"

"Can't tell about that guy."

"He's a cheerful little fellow."

"You'll hear him laugh."

"I get you. Well, maybe he'll hear me laugh too."

Whereupon the sergeant laughed and said, "You're all right, kid. I hope you make a monkey out of him."

Nothing much happened for a few days. I wrote a suicide story that had an angle that Whittick missed. MacMurchy said if I kept that up the job was mine.

Then came the first blow. The chief of the fire department telephoned the office to send over a reporter. I went. He was an affable man, too affable, I afterward realized. He gave me a story of an old lady in the suburbs whose house had been robbed and set on fire by burglars.

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"When did this happen?" I asked.

"Night before last."

"Were the police notified?"

"Of course."

"Why didn't they report it?"

"I guess you're new around here," he laughed.

I went out to see the victim who was still living in the partially gutted house, where she had been alone for some years.

She was a shadowy old lady of obvious breeding. In a distant voice she told me of returning to her home on the evening of the catastrophe just in time to see two men leaving a side window. They ran out the back yard. She entered the house and found everything in confusion. She went at once to a closet in which she kept her valuables hidden, chief of which was a jade necklace given her by her long-deceased husband on their honeymoon in China. This and other lesser treasures were gone. As she returned to the living room she saw smoke emerging from the doorframe of an adjoining room. She opened the door and found the room in flames.

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She ran out of the house, intending to turn in an alarm at a box on the corner, but already a man was attending to it. The fire was quickly suppressed, doing only partial damage. I asked her if the police had been notified. She said they had gone over the house carefully, had questioned her at length, but that she had heard nothing from them since.

I wrote the story with considerable emphasis on the necklace, the Chinese honeymoon and the sadness of its long aftermath. MacMurchy played it up. Next morning it glowed on the front page. Whittick had missed it.

That evening I made a rather jaunty entrance into the station house. Whittick saw me and laughed, then embarked on his telephoning. I seemed to sense a strained atmosphere in the place. The sergeant was particularly determined in his occupation with a newspaper. I happened to pass an open door leading to the detectives' quarters and Chief O'Connor's suite beyond.

Seated at a desk in the detectives' room was a great hulk of a man with a white shock of bristles and smooth ruddy face with clipped white mustache. He was dressed in

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rather formal attire and was talking to two plain-clothes men.

The moment he saw me he shouted "Come here!" I stepped to the doorway.

"Are you the —— fool on the *Globe*?"

"I'm on the *Globe*."

"Did you write that —— —— of a story?"

"What story?"

"You know what story, you ——"

"Do you mean the robbery and arson the police didn't report?"

That did it. He leaped from his chair, lunged toward me, shook his enormous fist in my face and loosened a tirade of profanity and abuse that seemed to be ushering him into apoplexy.

"I'll get your job, you —— I'll get your—job."

After the first shock the tirade left me cold and disgusted.

"I don't know who you are," I said, "but I take it from your manner that you're Chief O'Connor. Well, Chief, if

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you can get my job I don't want it." Whereupon I left the room and went to the reporters' table where Whittick sat grinning. I put in the usual round of calls, then read the evening papers.

In a short time O'Connor sent for me. I went to his office. He was calm.

"Sit down," he said. "You were a sap to fall for that fire-eater's story. He tried it on you because he knew you were green. He stays awake nights trying to figure ways to put this department in wrong. The other boys know it so they pay no attention to him. You should have come to me for confirmation."

"I thought you were holding out."

"I was, but I would have told you why."

"Why?"

"What's the good of arresting that old woman? She hasn't harmed anyone but herself. She's waived the insurance, and the company's agreed not to prosecute."

"You mean she set fire to the place?"

"No one else."

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"Did she confess?"

"That wasn't necessary, but she did, three hours after the fire."

"Why, only yesterday afternoon she told me——"

"I know. It was the story she had rehearsed for days. It was the first one she told us. She'll probably tell it the rest of her life. Well, let her stick to it. She's going to be better off anyhow. Some relatives in Iowa are coming for her."

"Is there anything you want written about it?"

"No, let the poor old soul alone. Do you like hamburger and onion on rye?"

"I don't know."

"Come on, we'll get one."

And thus began one of the most interesting friendships I have had. I was at a loss to understand the change in him. Later I asked him and he said,

"Well, I'll tell you, kid, when I told you I was going to get your job, and you told me if I could get it you didn't want it, I felt ashamed, and I hadn't been ashamed of anything for so damn long that it made me feel good."

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O'Connor, once referred to by William Pinkerton as "the best policeman in America," was an outstanding example of the old-time police theory that was entirely concerned with practical not moral results. It was his business to prevent crime. Any end that accomplished that justified the means. His lifelong method had been to know the professional criminals, their specialty, and the marks they left by which he could know their identity.

Not infrequently when walking the street with O'Connor I have seen him stop, beckon to a passer-by and say to him, "When did you get to town?"

"Just got in this morning, Chief, on my way to Duluth, going right out."

"That's all right, you can stay as long as you like, but while you're here report at the station at nine o'clock every morning."

"All right, Chief."

If anything bearing the mark of this criminal was reported and he failed to appear at the station, the search for him was begun at once.

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O'Connor undoubtedly got constant information from criminals, and frequently befriended them.

He was a born lie detector and got his confessions without strong-arm methods. In cases of robbery and theft his chief interest was in the recovery of the stolen goods, not in the punishment of the criminal. He did not believe much in prisons.

There was once a famous shoplifting gang in Chicago headed by a woman known as Maggie the Gun.

They laid out regular towns which took them through the Northwest to the Pacific coast and by a Southern route back to Chicago. Everything was done on schedule, so many hours being allotted to each city, stores assigned to the different members, place where stolen goods were to be gathered and crated for shipment to Chicago, train on which they were to depart. They worked very fast, and were the despair of the police. For some years they had omitted St Paul from their itinerary, not caring to mix with O'Connor.

One day shoplifting reports began piling in at Central.

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O'Connor said "Maggie the Gun," dispatched detectives to all railroad terminals and waited.

Maggie and her gang were picked up as they were about to embark on a Great Northern train. Some of the stolen goods were found in the express office tagged for an address on South Clark Street, Chicago, but already some of the goods had been shipped.

Maggie and her crew were brought into the station house, Maggie a robust, rather attractive matron. When she saw O'Connor she burst out laughing and said:

"You big —— I thought I'd take a chance on you just once."

O'Connor laughed, invited her into his office while her friends were being registered, and from the gaiety that emerged from the chief's office he and Maggie were apparently having a pleasant visit.

Within two hours, all the wires between Chicago, Springfield and St Paul were being pulled to get Maggie free. She was not without influential friends. O'Connor insisted that she would have to do time but that he would be satisfied

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with a six-months workhouse sentence for the crowd, which was what they got.

In the meantime, representatives of the St Paul merchants were sent to the South Clark Street address to identify goods that had been shipped before the arrest. Everything was recovered.

When the robbed merchants learned of Maggie's light sentence there was a screaming protest against O'Connor's laxity in pressing the charges. He sent for them. They came, all wrapped up in their indignation. O'Connor said:

"Now look here, I'm getting tired of hearing of this case. You've got your goods back, the woman and her gang are in jail. She probably won't come here again. But if you want publicity I'll give it to you. Your representatives identified and seized a number of articles that were never in your stores. I've got the list. If you want me to publish it I will."

A subdued group of merchants bade O'Connor "Good day."

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This episode might explain O'Connor's preference for crooks to businessmen—that he preferred them there is no doubt.

Earlier in O'Connor's career he had been removed from office in a reform upheaval, and was succeeded by a German hotelkeeper.

At once there was an outbreak of crime in the city—hold-ups, robberies, safeblowings and petty offenses.

Curiously enough full details were immediately reported to the newspapers by telephone, and the papers were coming out with crime reports of which the police had no inkling. The German chief was rapidly approaching insanity, which was practically assured when the safe in Central Station was blown.

It was claimed but never proven that O'Connor had engineered the whole demoralizing campaign. Much to the German's relief, O'Connor was returned, and never disturbed again until his retirement.

An angry old gentleman came into the station one evening demanding immediate mobilization of all the police. His

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purse containing thirty dollars had been lifted from his pocket on a streetcar.

O'Connor sent out word to four different pickpocket gangs hibernating in the city to send in the purse. Within two hours four purses, each containing thirty dollars, appeared, all of which were turned over to the astonished old gentleman.

There was an unpopular managing editor who reported one morning that he had been robbed of his week's pay while passing through a small park the night before. O'Connor did not seem to do much about it.

Two days later an angry little spitfire appeared, demanding to see O'Connor. She was the editor's wife. She laid O'Connor low, and demanded the apprehension of the criminals and recovery of the money or she would take steps. O'Connor was patient and polite, and promised to do what he could. As soon as she was gone he sent for the editor.

"See here," he said to that dejected person who apparently had been hearing from his wife, too, "if you don't tell your

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wife where you were that night and how you spent the money, I will. Of course I can see why you might not always want to go home, but don't make me the goat."

"All right, Chief," said the editor, "I'll fix it up somehow."

A robbery of a guest's room in the Windsor Hotel was reported. Among the stolen articles was a pair of gaudy suspenders that the intruder had taken the trouble to detach from the trousers. O'Connor scanned the report and said to the detectives:

"Look for a strange nigger with a pair of loud suspenders." Later in the day he was brought in. He was wearing the evidence.

So you see my first contact with law enforcement was with a type more realistic than admirable. Yet in a way it was admirable too. It was understanding without anger.

YES, I LISTENED to the symphony Sunday afternoon. I wish I could find in it all that you found, but modern music is out of my range. I have little that responds to it. Its apparent effort to avoid design seems to me definitely designing. It seems more calculated than inspired, but how can I judge that which escapes me? I was raised on Welsh music. Perhaps its simple beauty has conditioned me against highly complicated forms.

Do I think that O'Connor was a good man? I know he was an unselfish man who in his devious ways did great good. He gave his life to his work and had no diversions. He never drank nor smoked nor joined in any kind of social relaxation. He lived with an invalid wife, and had no chil-

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dren. He spent sixteen hours a day every day of the year on duty. He was no desk chief. He was top policeman. The city was his beat and he patrolled a considerable part of it every day. There was no indication that he had money. There was doubtless graft in the department, but I think it was for the political machine rather than for him. I cannot imagine a man to whom money would be more useless. I doubt if he spent five dollars a day on his personal needs. He gave liberally but never in large amounts.

Yes, in many ways he was a good man and in some ways a great man.

The friendship he showed me after our pyrotechnic first meeting was apparently unusual for him. I discovered that he, like most self-sufficient people, was a lonesome man. It is the dependent people who find friends. They mingle with groups of other dependent people in churches or lodges or clubs or poolrooms or grocery stores, demanding and offering very little in the way of wit or wisdom, but finding no little warmth and hilarity in slender sources. O'Connor would have been lost in the average gathering of congenial men. He would have wondered how they managed to get

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home safely, knowing from long experience how trusting and easily victimized they were. His life had been spent in pursuing male and female harpies who preyed upon such as these. Their schemes seemed to him so transparent that he despised the victim even more than the perpetrator.

One night, over sandwiches, he said to me: "You'd better come down to Stillwater with me tomorrow afternoon. There's a firebug in the penitentiary that wants to confess. Had a letter from him. I think I know what it's going to be. It ought to make a story."

I met him at the station the following day. On the train he told me something of the convict we were to visit. After committing several minor offenses he had been arrested with four other petty criminals for setting fire to a small slaughterhouse between St Paul and Minneapolis. The case had been handled by the Minneapolis police. During the trial he had confessed, absolving the others completely. He was sentenced to a long term and the others dismissed.

"Why does he want to confess to you since you didn't send him up?" I asked.

"I got word to him that I was interested in the case and

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someday would like to know the facts. There was more to it than was suspected. If I am right, you will hear the story of how five morons conceived the plan of setting fire to millions of dollars' worth of property to divert suspicion from their main object, which was to burn down a slaughterhouse worth at most ten thousand dollars."

We arrived at the prison, and our man was brought in. He had the smell and look of prison, both of which were heightened by the fact that for some infraction he had been in solitary confinement. At first he discovered, apparently to his astonishment, that he could not speak for more than half a minute. The unaccustomed effort of sustained speech left him gasping.

With great difficulty and many periods of rest he finally wheezed out the story. O'Connor had guessed right. Prior to his arrest he and his gang had worked up a fairly thriving business of stealing cows in the country just around the Twin Cities and selling them to the proprietor of the slaughterhouse. A difficulty arose in which the thieves felt themselves aggrieved. They decided to avenge themselves

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by setting fire to the slaughterhouse. But somewhere in the group was a master mind who urged that the job should leave no trace of suspicion. Practically adjoining the insignificant slaughterhouse was a plant of one of the great harvester companies. This plant represented an investment of several million dollars. Master Mind urged that the smart thing was to set fire to the harvester works at the same time. But Master Mind had not yet exhausted himself. The harvester company had a large plant outside of Chicago. The crowning smart thing to do was to set fire to that plant at the same time. Then it was dead open and shut that the incendiaries were aiming at the harvester company and not the little slaughterhouse. Incredible as it may sound, the scheme was carried out, resulting in the destruction of the slaughterhouse and considerable damage to both harvester plants.

The butcher, however, disregarded the harvester-works fire, and had the gang arrested and charged with the crime. This disappointing outcome of their elaborate planning came as such a surprise that the gang got panicky, and early

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in the trial our man agreed to take the whole load if they in turn would agree to look after his girl while he was in prison. They agreed, and for a time kept their agreement. Then they forgot. Thus the confession. Still panting, our man was led away.

"Did you figure the Chicago fire?" I asked O'Connor on the way back.

"That was the key," he replied, "they overplayed it."

I had the story alone. It was a present from O'Connor.

With this and several previous beats, Whittick became rather respectful. He gave me a few small stories, apparently paving the way to a reciprocal arrangement which did not appeal to me. Then came an unexpected news source which caused Whittick many frantic hours. In calling Central for the hospitals I was usually served by the same operator. We gradually struck up a telephone friendship and in the dull hours of early morning frequently held protracted conversations. Her name was Julia. One morning Julia tipped me to an important story not yet reported to the police. She had it all. My only job was to confirm it. The people concerned

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tried to hold out, but my information was so complete that they saw it was useless. From that night on Julia supplied me with a regular service, and she had a real news sense.

The effect on Whittick was rather demoralizing. He could not figure the source. As a matter of fact, it was he who had paved the way for me, for it was his invariable rudeness on the telephone that inclined Julia toward a stranger who was cordial. I never saw Julia, but we were great friends. I used to send her theater passes for matinees. By this time MacMurchy was highly complimentary about my work and, as there was no available money for a salary increase, arranged for me to earn extra money by handling the telegraph desk on my night off.

On a Monday afternoon a woman from Minneapolis came to the station and reported that her husband, from whom she had been estranged, had called at her home the previous afternoon with a horse and buggy and asked if he might take their four children out for a drive. She consented. When evening came and they did not return, she became alarmed. She notified the police, who said they would investigate.

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She waited up all night, but there was no news. The following morning the St Paul police notified the Minneapolis police that an abandoned horse and buggy had been found Monday morning on the Smith Street Bridge over the Mississippi. The description tallied with the vehicle that her husband had used. The husband had not returned to his rooms. She was convinced that he had thrown the children into the river and had followed them. She was not hysterical or vindictive, but convinced. O'Connor thought her conclusion farfetched. He tried to persuade the woman that the leaving of the horse and buggy on the bridge was a ruse, and that the husband had gone off with the children. He agreed to start a search at once, beginning with enquiries at all railway stations.

"There is only one place to search," she replied.

The other reporters took O'Connor's view and treated the story as an abduction, giving little space to the woman's suspicions.

Something about the sureness of the woman convinced me that she was right. Here was an instance when a mother's

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intuition seemed to me more dependable than police logic. I played up the story entirely from her conclusions, giving little credence to the abduction theory.

And now came anxious days. An intensive search by the police had failed to reveal any trace of the missing five. The river had been equally reluctant. With no positive evidence on either side public interest grew apace, and by the fourth day the tension was high. Suddenly it dawned upon me that I was wishing every moment that those unfortunate people would not be found alive. This realization filled me with a nauseating disgust of myself. It seemed incredible that the desire to be right could make one so cruel. The whole case took on an entirely different meaning. It became an indictment of me, and on the fifth day, when the river gave up the first child, I said to myself, "There is your wish." One by one they all came up, the father last, as he had gone in. The ironic climax was that I was congratulated all around. As though that poor, tortured man had taken the lives of his children and given his own just to present a newspaper puzzle to which I happily would find the solution.

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Though I continued in newspaper work two years longer, I believe this experience first revealed to me the essential cruelty of effectively satisfying the public appetite for what is considered news. Whether the newspapers have created this appetite or are merely satisfying it is beside the point. The point is that a large part of their activity is devoted to the ferreting out and retailing of tragedy and misfortune that are essentially personal, the knowledge of which can benefit no one. A good newspaperman is necessarily impertinent and heartless. His offenses, like those in many other activities, must be blamed upon the time in which he lives and what it requires for survival.

But if the experience brought its unhappiness to me it also did me a great service in teaching me the relative unimportance of being considered right by others. This need for approbation is one of the shackles of life. People go to such ends to satisfy it. It colors their work, their social life, their religion, their choice of companions, their choice in marriage, their opinions, their way of living, the clothes they wear, the food they eat, their places of recreation. From

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childhood to the grave there is this pathetic posturing for the approval of people, most of whom can mean nothing to them and many of whom they despise. This is indeed self-imposed slavery.

As my final choice of a career was to be the production of plays, it was especially valuable to me thus to be freed in advance of the necessity for the approval of others. No creative work can express the person who is afraid to stand alone. The one great right the creative person has is the right to be wrong. That is the one right that no one can take from him. If he ever gets the idea that there is something shameful in being considered wrong then he has forfeited his chief right. He has voluntarily put on the shackle.

The greatest slaves to the opinion of others that I have encountered are the people of Hollywood. There the servitude is so complete that it amounts to horror. The fear of failure is the specter that haunts their extravagant homes, rises before them out of their swimming pools, rides with them in their limousines, haunts their parties, hovers over their pillows at night and sits with them at breakfast in the

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morning. They even believe failure infectious. They shrink from talking to anyone who is regarded a failure. Not all the gold in the hills of Hollywood nor electric signs from Venus to Mars can compensate for such self-abasement.

No, my boy, never permit such fetters to touch you. The one person you must finally face is yourself, and you cannot do that if you have spent your life adjusting yourself to the gaze of others.

YOU ASK IF I BELIEVE in intuition, inspiration, clairvoyance, those unfathomed guiding forces that seem to enter man from the surrounding ether and to be no part of himself or his thinking processes. That there are frequent demonstrations of powers that cannot be explained, there is no denying. I have encountered a number of them of which I shall tell you. I believe that man plays a conscious or unconscious part in these mysteries to the extent that his psychic avenues are open to them. If we first believe that there are forces outside of man seeking expression through him, and next that man has conduits through which it is possible for these forces to pass providing the conduits are open to them, we arrive at the conclusion that the presence

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of the forces is not enough. There is a point at which man must open the way for them. It is here that the efficacy of faith becomes apparent. It is not faith that moves mountains. It is faith that opens the way for forces that can move mountains. True prayer, the prayer that is affirmation of man's submergence in God, which means in all creative and guiding forces, is likewise a way of union between man and these forces. This is not the prayer that humbles a man, that brands him a sinner seeking forgiveness, that makes him a suppliant for a life of no pain or privation. This is the prayer that affirms man's great heritage, the prayer that exalts man rather than one that humbles him and makes him a mendicant.

If man recognizes this heritage he realizes that his fellow man is equally blessed, and looks upon him with respect because of his divine endowment. It is here that brotherhood lies awaiting resurrection through man's realization of the common heritage.

Tagore, in his memoirs, speaks of walking one day with his mother when he was a child. They saw a debauched man lying senseless in the road. The child expressed disgust,

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whereupon the mother said to him: "He, too, is on his way to God. All people are on their way to God." The search is long and may cover many lives, but the lesson seems plain. Man must ultimately find God. Until he does, his task is not completed. When man has found God is his seeking over? It seems unlikely. There may easily be higher spheres which he enters, once more a novice. Perhaps in some exalted existence he helps generate the very forces he once so vaguely sensed.

As to clairvoyance and its varying mediums from astrology to tea leaves, I am impressed by Dr Jung's theory that anything which people have believed in for centuries has a basis of truth or it could not have survived.

The one professional clairvoyant whom I have known was Evangeline Adams the astrologist. While she based her findings and predictions on hastily drawn charts, I have always believed that she was a seer in the true sense, and could have accomplished startling results with tea leaves, a crystal ball or any medium of concentration. I first went to her out of curiosity, and was ignorantly skeptical. I had only produced two or three plays at the time and was practically

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unknown. Taking no chances, however, and thinking to make it more difficult for her, I wrote for an appointment under an assumed name. I was determined in advance to answer no questions.

I went to her studio and, as I sat across the table from her, was impressed by her strong, wise, honest New England face. Here was no trace of charlatanism. I gave her my birth date and the hour as nearly as I could. She made some quick markings on a chart, consulted what looked like key books, made additional markings, and in a moment I heard the salient parts of my past, together with a description of my characteristics, being so accurately summed up as to startle me. She asked no questions. I volunteered no information. Then she said:

“You are in some artistic activity that has to do with others. I should say it was the theater and that you are a producer. You haven’t done much yet, but your work is new and different. Yes. That’s it. I should say that you are Arthur Hopkins.”

That may be listed as one of the major surprises of my

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life. She told me many things, then and later, and I do not remember her being wrong. I did not always follow her. There was one time when she advised me to be inactive for what seemed an interminable period. She assured me that during that time nothing would succeed no matter what merit it had. I protested that I could not just step out of the way until the storm had passed. Perhaps the storm was to be part of my experience, too, a part I had no right to avoid.

She was right. The storm came and lasted a long time. Somehow I think I was right, too, to battle it.

There was a time when I was considering going to Hollywood. There were two offers, both more than generous as to money but both rather indefinite as to what freedom of expression I might have. I went to Miss Adams, thinking she might determine in which studio I would encounter the more sympathetic attitude.

She asked me the name of the man I was dealing with in the larger company. I gave it to her. She found his birth date in *Who's Who* and had scarcely finished her speedy chart outline when she recoiled as though she had been

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struck. "Oh! this man is about to go through a dreadful time. He's going to lose everything he's got including his present position. You can't look to him."

The man of whom she spoke was at the time worth millions. He was vice-president in charge of production of one of the largest picture companies. He had been one of the founders. No position could seem more secure, no fortune more safe, but all that she predicted came true.

Afterward I had a guilty feeling about this man's misfortune, a feeling that I might have given him some warning. I was tempted to at the time. He was an old friend of mine of whom I had always been very fond. In the early days we both produced vaudeville acts. Somehow I could not bring myself to impart to him this message of disaster, and on the face it did seem absurd. Perhaps it was vanity that stopped me, the fear of looking foolish.

The second picture offer was disposed of more speedily. Who's Who imparted another birth date.

"You can't bank on him," she said. "He'll not be there six months." He wasn't.

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When the World War was over and it was being hailed as the last great war she said:

"They've made a great mistake. The war was not finished. They will have it all to do over again," a prediction that seems more ominous now than it did in the rejoicing days of 1919.

When Hoover was elected and the world was booming, she said, "He will have a heartbreaking term of office and will retire in four years a bitter and discredited man." What could have seemed less likely at the time?

There was a vaudeville magician named Houdini who got the idea late in life that it was his mission to expose spiritualism. He offered to forfeit ten thousand dollars if he could not duplicate any mediumistic feat ascribed to the spirits. He got pretty bitter in the controversy and was merciless in his denunciations.

One day Miss Adams asked me if I knew Houdini. I told her I did. "Then," she said, "you'd better tell him to stop this nonsense. He doesn't know the forces he is challenging. If he persists they will kill him."

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Not long after Houdini, who was a man of unusual muscular development, strained himself while moving a trunk in his dressing room and died of an intestinal rupture, this man who by sheer strength had wriggled out of thousands of strait-jackets, kicked himself out of countless screwed-down packing cases submerged in the river, this man of iron moved a trunk, and died.

What had this particular prediction to do with astrology? Nothing that I can see. It only bears out my contention that she was a seer to whom astrology was incidental.

There was an old, ignorant German woman living modestly on Cleveland's west side. She read tea leaves. It was said that Mark Hanna was among her patrons, that in political matters he frequently consulted her. Hanna's chief interest in politics, all the cartoonists of his day to the contrary, was the career of his friend William McKinley. He loved the man deeply. From congressman to governor of Ohio to the presidency, Hanna propelled McKinley. Finally the tea leaves spelled a tragic message. The old German woman foretold the assassination of McKinley.

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He was about to make a short speaking tour of the country, terminating at the Buffalo Exposition. Every possible precaution was taken to protect him. Guards were increased, police in the various cities were notified of the need of special caution, railway officials put heavy guards around stations and increased track patrol. The President was not for one moment, awake or asleep, freed from the watchful eyes of a heavy guard. What happened?

McKinley is receiving at the Buffalo Exposition. On either side of the long line are stationed police and plainclothes men carefully inspecting the people in line for any suspicious sign. Surrounding the President is a heavy guard of Secret Service men carefully scrutinizing each person as he approaches.

Far back in the line is a man with a clumsily bandaged right hand in which a gun is concealed. Inch by inch he moves toward the President, passing officers every few feet. For more than an hour he moves forward. People in the line behind him see the bandaged hand; officers see the bandaged hand. The bandage is so bulky that the man cannot conceal

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it. Finally he is third in line approaching the President. Surely the Secret Service men will notice. Now he is next but one. Now he is next. Now he stands fully exposed, bandaged hand and all. Surely now he will be seized. No one moves but the man. He steps toward the President, raises his bandaged hand, but even now is not seized. There is a slight pause. McKinley extends his hand. The man shoots him in the abdomen. Now, at last, he is seized.

What purer example of the workings of fate can you find than this? A moronic man works out in a hazy brain an impossible plan. Pitted against him is an abundance of experienced, intelligent precaution, nervously alert and apprehensive, seeking for the slightest sign of his intent, he carrying conspicuously the sign for them to read and they, all of them, for some unaccountable reason, failing to read it. His impossible plan succeeds. When fate steps in all reasoning processes are suspended. We can only say, "It happened."

How could the old German woman have foreseen this? How could Evangeline Adams have foretold so much? No

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one can answer. It was the baffled Hamlet who said, "There is more in Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than is dreamed of in your philosophy."

It is not strange that discouragement and melancholy sometimes come to you, and I am not sure that it is bad for you. Negative forces have their value if we can find it. I doubt if any fixed state is good for one, even a positive state. It is contrasting emotions and experiences that keep us alive. Continued elation without variation might just as easily lead to a neurotic condition as unbroken melancholy. I imagine it would be just as easy to giggle as to sob one's way into an asylum.

It seems to me that the chief harm of melancholy is our tendency to enjoy it, to luxuriate in it. There is a kind of distinction in misfortune which sets us apart. Any device that does that is tempting. It is possible for people to get pleasure contemplating the curses that have befallen them. Surely you have watched the satisfaction they have had in recounting them.

I have tried to regard melancholy as an interesting visitor.

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to observe. It is a liar and a magician. It can completely distort facts. Before our very eyes it convinces of things that we know to be untrue. It persuades the healthy man that he is dying, the ailing man that there are no healing processes, the rich man that he is a pauper, the loved man that he is betrayed. It is the calamity-howler of emotions, and yet a persuasive one, because no matter how many times its forebodings are proven false we still listen to them and are alarmed. Melancholy is a practical joker with a solemn mien. It is the bogeyman of grown-up children. Its antics are always interesting to watch. Once you find their amusing side they cease to alarm, and melancholy becomes the unshrouded impostor who was playing ghost.

I promised to tell you of my youth, the family and our neighborhood.

It was a gentle neighborhood, largely Welsh, on the outskirts of Cleveland. My grandfather was minister of the Welsh Presbyterian Church. Our house adjoined his, and, much to my mother's annoyance, my only memory of him

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was a switching he administered when I went out into the yard early one morning in my nightshirt. The tenderness he had shown me had left no imprint. I did not even remember his funeral, which must have been elaborately observed, for the Welsh believe in last homage, and he was a leader among them.

After his death and that of my grandmother, whom I remember faintly, chiefly for her lace caps and glasses that were domino-shaped instead of round, our house became a Welsh gathering place, and here the visiting ministers were entertained. I was the youngest of eight boys, a boy David and a girl, Catherine, had died before my birth. Father and Mother taught the older boys Welsh, but their interest in tuition diminished with each new arrival and by the time of my appearance had wholly subsided. This seemed an injustice to me, since there was so much said that I could not understand, particularly when there was company. Welsh is not a language that a child can easily pick up. It is full of strange sounds but it does have a beautiful rhythm. The words are almost sung, and when the Welsh first learn

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English this singing tendency is carried over, giving their speech a poetic gentleness that is not lost in American nasals until the third generation.

My mother and father were both born in Wales and brought to America as young children, so as far back as we know we are pure Welsh. We have no record of intrusion.

My mother was the center of our household. It was she who made final decisions, adjusted quarrels, maintained family harmony, and to whom all looked for comfort and guidance. It was she who sensed our neighborly obligations and was unfailing in her ministrations to the stricken and needy. Upon her death, when I was a little past twelve, our family solidarity began to crumble despite the presence of Aunt Lyde, a devoted and tender woman who came to take charge of our home. With her was a son, Ernest, about a year younger than I. He became and still is one of the family, much more active in keeping in touch with all of us and maintaining the family spirit than any of us have been.

My father was a poor, uneducated young man when he married the minister's beautiful and gifted daughter, and he

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never recovered from the wonder of it nor she, I am sure, from the unbroken blessing of his devotion.

My father had the uneducated man's unreasonable worship of education. So his life was unstintingly devoted to his sons acquiring that which youthful vicissitudes had denied him. In later years, when discussions raged at our dinner table, which was invariably, it seemed to me that Father with little difficulty could hold his own with his sons home from college bursting with theories that were frequently shriveled by his native logic. More might have been accomplished if Father had been sent off to college and the boys had stayed at home.

My mother's chief interest in these discussions was to see that they did not interfere too much with the primary purpose of the meal, and some of Father's finest red-headed flights were broken off with "There, there, Davy, your food is getting cold."

As I look back I wonder how my parents accomplished so much with so little. My mother, who was a comparatively frail woman, had only one servant, yet the house ran

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smoothly. Of course many of the chores inside and outside the house were performed by the younger children. But there was never any sense of the strain of making both ends meet, yet it never could have been absent.

If an unexpected outlay was needed, either for their own family or that of another, from some source the money was forthcoming. And there were the unexpected treats for the children, trips to visit relatives in western Pennsylvania, lake trips to Put-In Bay, picnics at Cottage Grove and Silver Lake, skates and sleds and warm clothes in winter, interesting visitors, Welsh singers and elocutionists, family singing with lusty basses and ringing tenors not quite drowning out my mother's clear soprano.

One frequent caller we youngsters prized above all others was a benign and handsome old millworker of no education who came in the evening, scrubbed and smiling, to tell us in rich accents and rhythm tales of his own improvisation—strange and exciting tales that were never written down. He was our neighborhood bard, a child of the old Welsh bards who for centuries held villagers spellbound with tales of

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Welsh betrayal by the English and songs of Welsh heroes and martyrs and lovers and saints. His name was Enoch Morgan, and after these many years I am still under his spell.

And then there were the annual cantatas, the most unforgettable one of which was a production of *Queen Esther* in which appeared such then unknown artists as Evan Williams, Dan Beddoe, Gwylim Miles and Florence Lewis. To this day I hear Williams' fateful rendition of "Israel, oh Israel, for thee do I tremble."

These cantatas were directed and the singers coached by a strange little gnome with an enormous chin and an inspiring musical flair whose name was Christmas George. I wish I could bring *Queen Esther* to life again. It would be something to add to your rich store of music.

Evan Williams, who later became famous in concert and musical festivals, lived in a house adjoining the field where we played baseball. No kids ever had such glorious singing wasted on them. When our noise became too much for him he would come out and umpire for us.

But greatest of all events was that supreme rarity, the

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eisteddfod, the famous festival contest that reaches far back into Welsh history and is still kept alive in America.

From all parts of the East contestants came—male choruses, female choruses, mixed choruses, quartets, trios, duos, soloists, elocutionists, and for three days our Welsh world was bathed in music. The crowning event was the joining of all the choruses into one great blending of hundreds of voices, and after that experience one's encounters with choral singing must necessarily follow a descending line. When you are out again, you and I will go to the first eisteddfod held either here or in Wales.

Christmas planning at our house began weeks in advance, and the moving spirit of this was my father, who loved to give presents and lead festivities but who was invariably vexed if a present were given him. He called it waste.

In my first Christmases there were seven boys at home, the oldest brother, Jeffrey, having taken a church in the suburbs of Cincinnati. The next eldest brother, Tom, was Santa Claus, and though for several years I knew it was Tom he frightened me terribly and I could not be pacified until

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he removed his cap and whiskers. Tom loved to give ridiculous and worthless presents which he spent weeks in devising.

Father had everybody out of bed at four, and the two-hours racket was followed by breakfast. The irresistible dish was scalloped oysters prepared by Mother as they have never tasted since.

The morning was spent in getting acquainted with the workings of the presents and first steps toward their destruction; sampling candies and fruits which served as appetizers for the approaching dinner whose aromas were already drifting from the kitchen.

There was a great clatter when dinner was announced and Father, almost concealed by the towering bird, did the carving, calling out for the family preferences, as though they mattered in the least. Before long Father was completely visible. He had carved his way into our midst again.

After dinner came the family singing, from college-song collections, invariably beginning with "We Meet Again Tonight, Boys," and to this day that is the song which seven

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aged men wheeze through after the Christmas dinner, much to the amusement of their children and grandchildren.

When Tom married and took a home of his own about a mile from our house, Christmas morning began with a march in the dark to his house, which we approached very quietly and suddenly with a great burst of bugles and bells and drums and shouts of "Merry Christmas" the house was aroused, lights were slowly turned on, as if by someone just awake, and the door thrown open. Though our call was supposed to arouse them, Tom and Kitty were always fully dressed and breakfast by some magic was on the table.

After breakfast, accompanied by Tom and Kitty, and later the first grandchild, Mabel, the procession returned to our house where Mother had prepared a later breakfast. The family was united again and later on rang out "We Meet Again Tonight, Boys."

C HAPPEL JUST TELEPHONED. He was highly complimentary about the first of your "Songs for Strings." When the group is finished he will publish them. He says he will arrange to have the Arion Quartet come to you and play them. I will have him come along, so on that day we shall have a party; Dr Tanner, the nurses, Chappel, the quartet, you and I. If Lehman of the *Courier* is free we will have him along too. He takes his judgment seriously and will offset any overpraise in which we might indulge.

It is true I did promise to tell you about my participation in the McKinley tragedy.

After a year in St Paul I bade O'Connor, MacMurchy, Julia and the others good-by and returned home. I found a

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place on the *Cleveland Press*, but for a time was given no regular assignment.

One afternoon the country was stunned by the news of the shooting in Buffalo. Feeling in Cleveland was particularly tense, since McKinley was looked upon as one of our neighbors, he having spent his life in the near-by city of Canton and his political career having been largely shaped by Mark Hanna, one of our leading citizens. McKinley was much beloved, distinctly a gentleman of the old school and a man of great personal honor. He was tolerant and kindly, a product of a passing order, and doubtless in these days would be considered hopelessly reactionary. He was a believer in high tariffs, the gold standard, ship subsidies, and all measures that aided the expansion of American business. He, like many of his time, believed that the welfare of the workers was assured by the prosperity of the employer.

He had met and defeated the first serious challenger of the old order, William Jennings Bryan, and was now serving his second term as President.

He had conducted his campaigns for the most part from

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the front porch of his Canton home, refusing to be absent for protracted periods from his wife, who had been an invalid for some years and whose side he rarely left. There was no radio in those days, so delegates from all parts of the country stood in the McKinley front yard and listened to the kindly gentleman, in whom there was never a trace of anger, vituperation or self-seeking, reaffirm in moving terms his faith in American institutions. In our part of the country he was loved more for himself than for his achievements, and that he should be a victim of violence was unbearable. People were torn between grief and outrage. From what part of hell could the fiend have come? As it happened, he came from our own town, a fact that I was to confirm on the following day.

Our office seethed with excitement. The news from Buffalo was meager. The assassin was a stolid fellow who refused to discuss himself or his deed. Toward evening he said his name was Nieman, and that his home was in Detroit. The dispatches said he wore the button of a fraternal organization. Beyond that and the uncertain condition of the

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President no facts came. The President had been taken to the home of John C. Milburn.

Diligent search in Detroit revealed no trace of the assassin's identity. Though ours was an afternoon paper most of the staff remained at the office until late in the night waiting for the break. At three o'clock in the morning it had not come, and by this time most of the staff had gone. Three of us went across the street to a small hotel. At five o'clock I awoke and went back to the office. I had just reached the top of the stairs when a one-armed man in shirt sleeves came rushing at me with a dispatch.

The one-armed man was Robert (Bob) Paine, editor of the *Press* and one of the early giants of the Scripps-McRae chain of newspapers. These papers had come into quick success by following a militant crusading policy. They fought political graft, public-service corporations, laxities in government administration, anything which they considered abuse of the people, and in those days they were considered disgustingly yellow by the more conservative.

Paine was scrupulously honest, entirely fearless and had

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a strain of sadism. He loved to come down on heads that he thought were out of line. Possibly the lost arm had sought compensation in the remaining fist, for this was swung with the might of a sledge. The term "two-fisted" never impressed me much after knowing Paine. One fist can be more deadly.

With the one fist clutching the dispatch he came rushing at me. "Get after this" he shouted. It was the first time he had spoken to me. I am sure he did not know me, but he had been waiting there alone for interminable minutes with a possible big story in his hand, waiting for someone, anyone, to come. I happened to be the first. I took the wire. It read:

"He now gives the name of Leon Czolgocz. Says his people live on a farm fourteen miles from Cleveland."

That was all. No word as to near what village outside of Cleveland the farm might be located or in what direction—just fourteen miles from Cleveland and that was all.

But fate was with me. It was now nearly half-past five. At seven o'clock I was talking to Czolgocz' mother.

On first seeing the incredible name "Czolgocz" it struck

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me that if there was anyone else in God's world with the same name he would have to be related. Was there anyone in Cleveland with that name? I looked in the city directory. There was. The address was a street in a Polish settlement on the outskirts of the city, a settlement that I knew well. It was about two miles from my home. As kids we had staged numerous battles with the young Poles of this neighborhood, battles that usually followed the breaking up of ball games, or raids on our clothes when we were in swimming.

I bolted for a streetcar, and in about three quarters of an hour reached the Czolgocz house. I knocked at the front door, side door and back door. There was no one at home. As I waited at the back door a woman began hanging out clothes in the adjoining yard. I asked her if the Czolgocz family lived there. She said yes, but they were away. I asked if she knew where. She didn't. I asked if they had a son named Leon. She said they hadn't. I asked if they had relatives living on a farm near Cleveland. She said yes, at Chagrin Falls. My heart leaped. Chagrin Falls would be about the right distance. But, she added, they lived there no

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longer. They had moved into town but two months before. I asked where. She said Fleet Street. I knew Fleet Street. It was only a few blocks away. I asked where on Fleet Street. She said two doors down from where the streetcar turns. I knew the spot. I was there the next minute. A woman answered the front door, and shook her head when I said Czolgocz. I knew that these houses were usually occupied by more than one family. I went to a side door. No Czolgocz. They may have thought I was bringing trouble or possibly my pronunciation of the name was unintelligible. At the back door a tall, thin woman answered. I said Czolgocz. She nodded "yes." I asked if Leon was her son. She repeated Leon and again nodded "yes." She could speak no English. I said wait, and ran to the corner drugstore. The druggist agreed to come back and interpret.

Leon was her son. He had not lived with them for some years. He worked in the wire mills and boarded in this neighborhood. He had been away for several months, and did not know that the family had moved in. There was a father and another son. There were no photographs of

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Leon or the family. There were frequent interruptions from her and the druggist. Why did I want to know? What had happened? But I held back the news until I had the family history, and Leon's in particular. Then I told them. The mother was terrified. She had the peasant's fear of the consequences of assassination. She thought the whole family would be executed. I tried to reassure her. I ran to the drug-store, and telephoned the news to an excitable and able city editor named Charley Lancaster. I could see him leap. He said he would send out an artist. So a little after seven o'clock the first of a series of explosive and exclusive extras appeared. "Assassin Lives At 308 Fleet Street." I went back to the house, hoping for the return of the father. A young man was just entering the yard. I asked if he knew Leon Czolgoz. He said he was his brother. "Have you a photograph of Leon?" "Yes." "Where is it?" "At my house." "Where's that?" "Down this way." "Come on," I shouted, and ran out of the gate. He followed, wanting to know what was wrong. I kept running on ahead, he directing me. I thought he lived near by. It was two miles out in the country. We

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ran all the way. He finally shouted "in there," pointing to the house. I turned in. In back he shouted again. I ran back. There was an outside stairway. Up there he shouted. I ran up and into a room. He followed, breathless and protesting. Where are they? Here, he pulled out a bureau drawer and picked up six beautiful cabinet photographs taken only a few months before. I seized all six, bolted out of the house, down the road and back to his mother's house. The artist, Satterfield, had just arrived. A car to town was passing. I thrust the photographs into Satterfield's hands and shouted, "Here he is—get that car." Satterfield chased the car and caught it. I telephoned Lancaster that the photographs were on their way, and that he had better send out another artist. He sent Landon.

I now had a chance to tell the brother what it was all about. I doubt if anyone had ever been kept in such galloping suspense. I got a much fuller story from him about Leon. So far as he knew Leon had never taken any interest in politics. He was a backward, morose man, who had kept largely to himself, had never married nor shown any roman-

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tic inclinations. He had done no reading. It was not possible that his dull brother could be an anarchist. He wouldn't know what it meant.

The father came. There was a terrified and touching scene between him and the mother. They could not understand. They were obviously good, hard-working people. I kept phoning the stories in to Lancaster. Landon arrived. Other reporters began to appear. I could see no more news around the Czolgocz home so I went on a new tack. For no special reason I called on the local priest, Father Rosinsky. He answered the door. With no preparation I asked, "Do you know Leon Czolgocz?"

"Yes," he flared. "He's an anarchist."

"Why do you say that?"

"He told me he was. I asked him for a contribution to my church. He said he didn't believe in churches, that he was an anarchist." Whereupon he broke into Polish that sounded profane.

I told the priest that it was Czolgocz who shot McKinley. He was startled, then angry. He poured forth a tirade.

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"Now he has brought disgrace on my people," he shouted. I left him as he called upon God for all the curses.

This was just another powder for Lancaster. Out came another extra, screaming across the page, "I am an anarchist."

It then occurred to me to see if there was any news behind the lodge button that Czolgocz wore. In the directory. I found that the secretary of the lodge in that district lived several miles away. I went to his house. His wife told me that he was at work in the wire mills, where he was a foreman. I was about to go to the mills when his wife, who was consumed with curiosity, detained me. She wanted to know if she couldn't help. I told her I only wanted to know if there was a member of her husband's lodge named Czolgocz. She said there was not. She knew all of her husband's lodge affairs, as she looked after the records. I was about to go when it occurred to me to ask if there was a member named Nieman, the name Czolgocz had originally given. Oh, there was indeed a Nieman. They had had a letter from him only

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two weeks ago. I asked if I might see the letter. Of course. It was sent from West Seneca, a place not far from Buffalo. The letter indicated a desire to make sure that his lodge affairs were straight. It had a note of preparation. The letter exploded the theory that Czolgocz had been following McKinley on his tour as was first supposed, the supposition being based in the belief that a suspected person who got away in the crowd at McKinley's Indianapolis appearance was Czolgocz.

I asked Mrs Secretary how she accounted for the name "Nieman." She said that was simple, that it was the custom of the timekeeper to substitute simple names for those that were too much trouble.

In the meantime, curiosity was consuming her, and I finally told her the reason for the inquiry. She seized the letter and her hat and ran off to the mill.

I telephoned the letter and the explanation of the two names to Lancaster. In the meantime, Mr Secretary turned the letter over to the mill authorities, who notified the police, and there was a great scurrying of detectives and reporters

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to get the contents of the letter which by now was on the streets.

Having no place to go I decided to interview a relative of Czolgocz, who kept a saloon. When I got there I ran into a celebration. There were shouts of "Hurray for Leon. Mark Hanna next!" I went to a telephone, called up the local precinct police station, told the captain there was an anarchists' celebration going on and that he had better send a wagon. The wagon arrived, police swarmed into the place, seized the celebrants, piled them into the wagon, and started for Central Police Station, a six-mile trip. Before they arrived at Central Station, Lancaster had another extra on the street. In the meantime, beautiful cuts of the cabinet photographs had appeared, and the efforts of the other papers to get copies were futile. There were only six, and we had them all.

It was not yet noon. The story had been completely covered. We had led all the way. The other papers found no new angles. We had cleaned the plate.

Bob Paine was complimentary. He showed me a telegram

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from an Indianapolis Associated Press paper saying, "For God's sake, send us your service." It afterward hung in his office with the caption "The A.P.'s Cry for Help."

But somehow the greatest pleasure I got from the whole experience was the elation it had provided Lancaster. It was his idea of a perfect day.

There seem to be occasional days in life when it is impossible to make a mistake. Many futures have been determined by the events of a single day, a sudden idea coming apparently from nowhere, a chance meeting, a delayed action. My day had started out with no plan, yet everything fell out as it should. I seemed to have little to do with it. Some bright force seemed guiding me. We take credit for much in life where little credit is due. We are decorated for accidents when at best we should only be credited with a degree of receptivity. We did not resist the idea too vigorously. It did manage to get through to us. The older I grow, the more impressed I am by people than by their achievements. Some people I know have apparently achieved little in life except the crowning achievement of

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becoming fine people. Somehow they seem more important than lesser souls of obvious achievement.

There is a story of John L. Sullivan, prize-fight idol of his day, being served a lobster with a missing claw. "Here," he bellowed at the waiter, "take this back and bring me the winner." The sequel to that story should be that the winner scored a last and crowning victory by knocking out the mighty Sullivan with ptomaine. This story expresses much of the modern-success adoration, a viewpoint instilled from childhood and nurtured by reading and education, coming to fine flower in commencement addresses, assuring young men and women that the world is their oyster and that their failure to open it will leave them among the unsung. We need a new conception of success. It isn't good enough, my boy. We need more permanent virtues for our adoration.

N_O, IT WAS NEVER PROVEN that Czolgoz was an anarchist despite his boastful statement to Father Rosinsky. There was a theory that he had been influenced by a radical woman agitator of the time, but this was wholly based on the fact that he had attended one of her meetings. There was no proof that she knew of his existence. One story had it that he had fallen in love with her, and conceived the assassination and self-sacrifice as tribute to his love. There was no evidence that anyone else had been concerned in the plot. From the time of the assassination he maintained a stolid silence that was never broken though the usual devices to induce talkativeness were doubtless used. Apparently there is no resolution to equal that of martyrdom. It seems to lift its subject into a state of hypnosis where physical

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reactions cease. The spike draws no blood. The flame does not burn. How little do we know of those flights of psychic release which seem to suspend physical laws.

As a reward for my lucky day, I was sent to Buffalo to join the Scripps-McRae staff that was covering the story. There were only four of us pitted against a large Associated Press staff, which was our special rival, and an army of special correspondents. We occupied tents opposite the Milburn home and there awaited the outcome of the President's losing struggle. We did not have our shoes off for a week, and lived on milk punch. Early I formed a friendship with a cabinet member who spent all of his time at the Milburn home and who twice a day would walk down Delaware Avenue until I overtook him. He kept us accurately informed. Through him we learned the day before the President's death that Theodore Roosevelt had been sent for to be consulted about inaugural plans. He was somewhere in the Adirondacks, and the time of his arrival was unknown.

At 2:14 on Saturday morning the President died. Several

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hours later Roosevelt arrived, and suddenly the whole place which for a week had been submerged in whispering mourning became vibrantly alive. The new day was ushered in with a loud report. Voices were raised, steps were quickened, typewriters and telegraph instruments shrieked as though just freed from suffocating gags. For the first time I clearly understood the import of "The king is dead. Long live the king." Here was life riding over death and being vigorously unapologetic about it.

Roosevelt, himself, unwittingly contributed to this sudden awakening. He was the symbol of life and vitality, a man born to be heard in storms and to create them. His glandular organization must have been inherited from Jupiter. When gentle zephyrs blew over him they became tornadoes. The funnel-shaped cloud, no larger than a man's hat, that spread cyclonic devastation, was Roosevelt's hat, the hat that he jubilantly threw into the ring. His smile revealed such threatening teeth that one understood the misgivings of Red Riding Hood.

Lincoln was the incarnation of patience—Roosevelt of

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impatience. Perhaps this was to be read in their eyes—Lincoln's sorrowing eyes whose haunting expression survives even in stone, Roosevelt's darting, challenging eyes that in youth grew weary of not seeing everything at once. Perhaps there is a punishment for optical gluttony. The eyes may have a sense of their own mission and may have ways of withdrawal when they lose patience with the use that is being made of them. Ears, too, revolt. I have a friend who is a psychoanalyst, a profound and understanding man. In recent years deafness has descended upon him and has now almost cut him off from the recitals of confused, inferior people to whose problems he has given his life. I have seen him after a weary day, and have wanted to quarrel with him for what seemed to me his misspent dedication, but who knows what is misspent? At any rate, his ears have revolted. Now he carries devices, a little black plug imbedded in the weary ear, wired to a pocket contrivance that has some sort of halting stimulation. His ear might find life again if it were freed of unwelcome sounds. Our infirmities carry messages of protest which too often we do not heed.

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Roosevelt was a man of great gifts and extravagant expression. When he rode, he rode rough. When he spoke, it was without qualification. When he struck, it was with a big stick. A critical one might have been more convinced of his fearlessness if he had not so emphatically asserted it. There is something about overstatement that suggests inner misgiving. His mildest pronouncement had the material of headlines. He excited and stimulated the people. His energy hypnotized them. His gift for phrase-coining delighted them. When he spoke, it was with upraised fist, and in his clenched hand they saw their rights held safe.

He was anathema to the old political group that controlled his party, yet his hold on the people was too great to be ignored. His breaking away from the party might be followed by dire consequences. They did not want him, but they dared not let him go, so he was at once imprisoned and sidetracked by being given the vice-presidential nomination, that historic banishment from which aspiring ones rarely return. But political leaders are no match for fate, and here was the banished one clattering through the streets of

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Buffalo ready to assume the honors which had been so cunningly placed beyond his reach.

Of course there was honest concern among the conservative ones of the country as to just what this sudden change in the nation's leadership might mean, McKinley had been so comfortably conservative. His were the ways that seemed to silence turmoil and to leave people unhampered in the pursuit of prosperity and security, which were definitely the chief ideals of the time. The full dinner pail had been his slogan. There had yet arisen little questioning in people's minds as to whether the ways of ease were the ways of injustice and decay. If any system could be held in a fixed position with no new evils forcing their way in, it can be fairly said that the system of McKinley's day was on the whole a beneficent one. There was a tendency to correct his abuses and give its benefits a wider spread. But it was a system offering many openings for vigorous attack. For this reason there was fear of the combative ones. Those radicals outside the pale could be dismissed, such radicals as Eugene Debs, who was waived aside as "that crazy Socialist." But

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Roosevelt was not outside the pale. He was a cultured, honorable man of distinguished lineage, and he was a Republican—and he was President. So here, indeed, was a vexing problem for those guardians of the old regime. It was evident that concern had been added to mourning in Buffalo that morning, and for that matter throughout the country. "What will Teddy do?" was the anxious question on many lips.

Roosevelt decided to be inaugurated at once, and the ceremony was set for that afternoon at the home of Ansley Wilcox on Delaware Avenue.

The oath was to be administered by Secretary of State Elihu Root. Here, indeed, were two contrasting figures, Root, the brilliant, cool, conservative lawyer and statesman, generally conceded to be the ablest man of his day, and the Rough Rider.

Root had been frequently urged for the presidency, but because of his corporation affiliations was not looked upon as a likely candidate. There is something ironic about a system that waives its call on the best brains in favor of the financiers

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whom it is supposedly seeking to curb. Yet it may have a reasonable basis in questioning any man's ability to change his allegiance. The foot may remain blue after the blue stocking has been removed.

I was assigned to cover the inauguration. The Wilcox home set far back from the street, and the long walk, from the curb to the open doorway, was lined on both sides with soldiers. At least two hundred correspondents had gathered, seeking admission. Obviously all could not be accommodated. William Loeb, Jr, Roosevelt's secretary, came from the house and notified the crowd that only three correspondents would be admitted, one from the Associated Press, one from the Publishers' Press, and one from the Lafan Bureau. Graham, of the Associated Press, who had been with Roosevelt in Albany and Washington, stepped forward, Ryan of the Lafan Bureau, then I. I explained to Loeb that I was representing the Scripps-McRae League, and that we were supplying our service to the Publishers' Press. He asked me if I was the representative of the Publishers' Press. I said I was not, that I represented the Scripps-

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McRae League, whereupon Graham, of the Associated Press, piped up, "Who ever heard of the Scripps-McRae League?" "You've been hearing plenty," I replied, and took this inopportune moment to remind him that within a year we had beaten them with news of the death of both Pope Leo and Queen Victoria, not failing to include the Czolgoz item. Loeb ended the argument with a polite "I'm sorry, but I cannot exceed my instructions," and he, Graham and Ryan started up the walk. I hesitated a moment, then decided to follow. The walk seemed endless, and I felt bayonets in my back all the way. As we got to the steps, a highly decorated officer stepped forth and said to Loeb, "Are these men all right?" Loeb said, "These two are, but I don't know anything about that one." Tension was high, and the officer's concern was understandable but so was mine, and I decided my only chance was to protest loudly, with the hope of attracting someone from the inside. As I was about to be seized, a gentleman stepped through the door to ascertain the difficulty. It was Mr Wilcox. I explained my predicament and he asked me to wait a minute. He went into the house,

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returned almost immediately and said to the commanding officer, "Mr Roosevelt says it's all right." I thanked him and went in.

The Wilcox first floor was divided by a large central hall with spacious rooms opening on either side. To the right was the library, and here the inaugural party was assembled.

Roosevelt and Root stood before the fireplace. As Root administered the oath tears were in his eyes. Tears seemed to be in all eyes but Roosevelt's. He stood tense and erect. After taking the oath and with his hand still upraised, he said in vibrant words, "I will carry out absolutely and unbroken the policies of our late President." That was the word the country was waiting for, and with his unfailing instinct he had pronounced it.

With the descent of his hand I was out of the house, down to a waiting car, and a minute later the message was going over a wire in the press tent that had been held open for me. I followed the first flash with a brief story of the inauguration.

About fifteen minutes later we were standing outside our

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tent when a car dashed up and out leaped Graham, rushing into the Associated Press tent which adjoined ours. A moment later, highly flustered, he ran up to me and asked, "Just how did the President say that?" I said, "Don't trouble to send it. Your editors are already reading it in our papers."

It seems that he had stayed behind to shake hands with the new President, and got caught in the jam.

And so, my boy, in one afternoon I witnessed the passing of an era and the installation of a dynamic figure who was greatly to influence his time. I continued reporting for two years after this, and then became a theatrical press agent.

Newspaper work is a valuable experience. It gives an insight into many sides of life, the chief danger of which is an easily acquired cynicism, the outcome of meeting such incompetence and pretense in high places. The reporter learns to appraise people and see through their deceits. He also learns how to get the confidence of strangers and how to respect it. Some of the best stories are never published because they were told in confidence. A secret is as safe with

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a reporter as it is in the confessional box. The person who fares worst with a reporter is the one who tries to conceal facts that must come out. It is better to tell him the truth and ask him to handle it with as much consideration as he can. He will be found not lacking in consideration. It took the large corporations a long time to learn that their unpopularity with newspapers was largely due to their refusal to divulge facts that could not be concealed. They doubled their appearance of wrongdoing. Concealment always breeds suspicion, and a suspicious newspaperman can find three woodpile niggers where there is only one.

A reporter learns early that as a rule the most important people are the most easily accessible. It is the pretentious man who erects barriers against approach. In this he finds confirmation of his self-appraisal. As a rule the reporter can tell the sort of person he is to meet by the way he is received in the outer office. Attitudes cannot be confined to the inner office. They seep out and color the demeanor of the employees.

In three years I had many exciting and some touching

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experiences. Of the latter I will tell you one that has always remained with me. I have never ceased wondering what became of the principals. They were a young man and wife, poor, ignorant and frightened foreigners. They appeared in court with their attorney, who had filed a petition to have their marriage set aside. As the two stood clinging to each other the judge looked over the papers and signed them. Their attorney turned to them, and told them everything had been settled. They wept. On inquiry I learned that a defective child had been born to them. In great concern they went to their priest. He learned that they were nearer of kin than second cousins. He told them that their blood relationship was the cause of the child's abnormality, and, furthermore, that their marriage was in violation of the state law. He told them it was their duty to separate and have their marriage set aside. Bewildered, they agreed. The child was to be placed in an institution. The wife was to go to live with relatives in Texas. The husband was to remain alone in Cleveland. Now the final step had been taken. In the almost-deserted courtroom they clung to each other and

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wept. They found no comfort in the words of their lawyer. The wife's train was leaving in an hour. The husband went to the station with her. Stricken, they waited. He put her on the train. There was a last embrace. He stood for a long time after the train had gone.

IT IS NOT that Dr Tanner has so many friends, rather that he is the friend of so many. He has the gift for giving himself, which to most of us is denied. He is not afraid of disappointment, since he requires nothing from friendship. His desire is not to be loved but to love. There are barriers against love, but there can be none against loving, so all hearts are open to Tanner whether or not they respond. Naturally some do respond, and he seems to have many friends, but it is only a small part of the love he has given returning to him. What many of us call friendship is only tolerant intercourse, and too frequently the tolerance is easily strained. The very word "tolerance" denies friendship. It bespeaks a sense of superiority, of trepidation, of

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limited trust. It looks to ways of easy withdrawal and quick escape. How often we hear of someone being "dropped by his friends." The expression is an anomaly. We cannot drop our friends. They are in our hearts, not our hands. If they have not found our hearts we have not been their friends, only friendly, and this is a relationship we can have with animals as well as men.

Is intercourse or communication necessary between friends? Some of our dearest friends we rarely see yet we are always conscious of their nearness to us. There are relationships that need no affirmation. The love that needs reiteration has always been a doubtful one. When we are doubtful we seek reassurance. The one who cries, "Tell me that you love me," is already conscious of love's absence, and seeks solace in words. Much of the world's love is confined to words, not necessarily deceptive words but words expressing a yearning that cannot find realization. Don Juan was the most unloved of men. He searched frantically but in vain. He found the semblance many times but never the substance. Instead of the great lover, he was the great un-

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loved, a starved rather than a sated figure. Satisfaction he never found, and the world has many counterparts, the bereft people who never can find love as they have no love to give, those seekers of rich harvest with no seed to sow.

I was born to parents who loved each other yet I doubt if they ever spoke of it. Love spoke through them constantly and encompassed them. Its fullness reached out to others. I know of only one cause of disagreement between them and that was I. My mother constantly defended my wrongdoings and would not permit of my punishment. Father's exasperation sometimes brought her to tears. He thought she was lenient because I was the youngest. I thought so too. But she had a deeper reason which my father never knew and which I alone was to learn shortly before her death. Of that I will tell you later.

My mother had the true quality of friendship. She did not judge people but served them in any way she could. In most cases her friendship was understandable, but in two cases, which left a lasting imprint on me, it puzzled me as a child.

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There were in our neighborhood two old Welsh widows, each of them living alone. Both had been of some consequence in the community in their better days and both in old age had become drunkards, drunkards who took turns in making spectacles of themselves in the streets. Each of these old women was occasionally brought into our house by my mother. She would wash the trembling one, put her to bed, give her fresh clothes to wear and feed her. But this was not the part that impressed. It was that when the patient had somewhat recovered my mother seated her at our table and treated her as an honored guest. To her they were still the women they once had been, and there was no change in her deference. Even though she abhorred drunkenness and degrading conduct she still respected them. They were old friends in her house, and gradually what they once had been emerged and they took on an almost forgotten dignity.

I remember one of them, whom we shall call Mrs Evans, delighting my mother by telling of a call she had made on an unpopular neighbor whom we shall call Josie Reese. Josie, though Welsh, was a miser. He was very old, looking some-

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what like a soiled replica of Ibsen. He was deaf, and used a highly malodorous tin ear trumpet. I remember that when I was told to speak to him I approached the trumpet reluctantly, shouted a quick hello and withdrew as far as possible. After a drab life Josie's wife went to what must have been a better world. Then Josie roused the ire of the neighborhood by failing to provide even the cheapest marker for his wife's grave. Josie added to his unpopularity by marrying his new housekeeper, a Cornish woman. It was said that he married her to avoid paying her.

Mrs Evans in a sober moment and doubtless prompted by some desire to vent her spleen on Josie made what almost amounted to a formal call on the generally ignored couple. Josie was pleased and affable, and finally said to Mrs Evans: "Come, I want to show you the beautiful wedding present I gave my wife." He led Mrs Evans into the parlor and pointing with pride said, "There it is." It was a marble-top table.

Mrs Evans looked at it, and turning to him shouted into the trumpet, "Josie, it's at the head of your poor wife's grave

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that ought to be." Having delivered her blow she left the stunned Josie alone with his marble top and his startled bride. Somehow this story reveals the grandeur that once must have been Mrs Evans, the grandeur my mother had not forgotten.

In her early days my mother had been a student of elocution. Like all Welsh she loved the sound of words. This never left her. She gave verse new meaning. Her readings from the Bible had such simple and expressive beauty as to make her seem a collaborator with those varied and unknown mediums through whom those words of unexplainable rapture have come. She taught us elocution, though elocution is too bombastic a word for what she tried to convey. There was no declamation or gesture. She sat very still and read to us. Her secret must have been belief in beauty, beauty of thought and expression. She spoke beauty, spoke it in overtones and rhythms. Words, like people, she made friendly to her. They came from her refreshed by her love. There came a time when she felt that my older brother, Ben, and I should have more professional training. She

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arranged lessons for us to be taken each Saturday afternoon at the teacher's studio. On the first day we knew that we would get little good from this man. He was surly, pompous and completely without feeling. His voice was something he had manufactured for effectiveness, a device that had ceased to be any part of himself. He picked it up like an instrument lying on the table, made dead sounds through it, then put it aside again. This was my first introduction to what I later came to know as ham acting, and doubtless was the birth of an aversion that has made me unreasonable ever since.

My aversion to this particular mentor quickly asserted itself. I refused to learn anything he assigned. I made no attempt to recite. I galloped through the words I was to interpret. The lessons were such an obvious waste that they were soon discontinued. But in their way they did me great good. When less than ten I learned the difference between honest and spurious reading, and since my later way of life was to deal largely with words and their inner meaning I am probably indebted to the first vain and self-conscious

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mouther of my acquaintance. I was to know many like him later, but in him I had met them all. I was never surprised again.

Was it my mother's spell with words that finally led me into the theater? If so, I never realized it. The theater had no part in my early aspirations. I was quite unfamiliar with it. I came of church people, stern people, who had little regard for ways of manufactured diversion. Those were the idle hands that the devil used. Not that they were narrow people. In the true sense they were broad and understanding people. They could only look upon the theater as doubtful diversion in which questionable people were involved. As I look back this seems rather sad, particularly in my mother's case, for I know of no one who would have been more appreciative of the best in the theater than she.

Of course there have always been two theaters, the admirable and the tawdry, the theater to which people gave themselves and the theater which people used. This is doubtless true of all arts and professions, open alike to the givers and the takers. So when we think of the theater we must

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distinguish between what is consecrated and what is devised. In one we may find exaltation, in the other debasement. Our reaction becomes revelation of ourselves. What do we revere? How pliable are we in accepting new meanings? Or is it pleasanter for us to respond to superficial patterns that bring no challenge? Are we alert and searching, or are we fixed by easy predispositions? In my time I have seen much in the theater that is acceptably lulling but little that is challenging. I have never felt that here is something I must grasp or despise myself. I cannot be as the Russian youth who stood day after day before a painting in the Hermitage and when questioned said, "I know that is great art, but I cannot feel it. If I cannot come to feel it I must kill myself."

I have felt moments of complete liberation in the theater, but those rare moments only heighten the conviction that for the most part the theater is bound to easy acceptance, to quick appraisal. Perhaps it is not its mission to be profound, yet it has been profound. Shall we take it at its best or at its medium? Shall we bring to it indulgent caprices just to

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prove that we are kindly people not demanding too much? The little grimaces delight us. The trite observation we accept as an old friend.

These attitudes are admissible, but admissible only if we realize that this is not the theater that might be but the theater in which we are comfortable, the theater to which we give prizes, not for worth but for acceptability, the theater in which we can recline and gently fan ourselves into polite appreciation and somnolence, the theater which does not interrupt our own little conversations.

Is the theater further proof of life's complete externalization, of the revolt against infiltration and meditation? Have we closed the deep avenues of penetration, leaving ourselves only a thick and resilient epidermis that delights in superficial bouncing? Is this true not only of the theater but of all our contacts? Have we so far protected ourselves that we now have stifled our inner responses?

These, my boy, are questions that I cannot answer. I pass them on to you. I believe this letter started out with a discussion of friendship, and, like all discussions, has

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taken unexpected turns. But I will end with a story of friendship.

William Gillette telephoned me not long ago, saying he would like to see me. I can think of no greater delight than seeing Mr Gillette, and I asked him to come at once. He had a personal project in mind that he wanted to talk to me about. We discussed it, and on leaving he said,

“I don’t know why I should trouble you with this, but what good is a friend if you can’t make an enemy of him?”

C HAPPEL THINKS the second of the group of songs a striking contrast to the first, and is pleased with its departure. He feels you have found a release which, if pursued, will lead you into new and exciting fields. He said a great deal more that was not quite intelligible to me but which he has doubtless written you. His enthusiasm over the work of another explains much of his success as a publisher. Only enthusiastic people should have the selection of what we are to hear and see and read. Only they have responses that are fully awake. I have never believed in calm, critical judgment where creative work is concerned. It reveals an intellectual rather than an emotional response. Art is not intended for the intellect any more than sunsets.

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Art, to be appreciated, need not be understood. Understanding is the province of intellect. It can best deal with tangibles. Art's reception must be emotional. Its appraisal should be an appraisal of the emotional reaction. It is not what we think of art but what it does to us.

My first close observation of the art of the theater was in vaudeville. I became press agent for a vaudeville theater. That in the vaudeville of thirty years ago there was much genuine art I was to realize more and more as I came in contact with the artificialities of the legitimate theater. The vaudeville actor created. The legitimate actor strutted. Vaudeville was a severe test. The actor had but little time to establish his character. His act had to hold from the first. Vaudeville audiences became quickly restless. The actor was allowed no credits for previous performance. It meant nothing to a Tuesday-night audience that his act had gone well on Monday night or that his reviews had been good. This was Tuesday night, and a different audience. It had to be done all over again. Letdown, the curse of the legitimate theater, was unknown to him. He always did his best. He

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had to. One bad report might mean canceled bookings. He could not recline on an established success and a run-of-the-play contract. He could not afford to be bored. Even if his act had been played for years it had to remain fresh to him. That was why he was welcomed again and again by audiences who had seen him many times. Seeing him was always a new experience. He knew that he could not get his effect by trying, but by being. If he tried too hard, he lost his audience. His only safety was in submerging himself completely in the character.

McIntyre and Heath played the same small repertoire of acts constantly for over fifty years. None of those acts were written. They were acts that grew out of improvisation. "You say that and I'll say this." And they were invariably played as though just improvised, as though being said for the first time. There was no sense of glibness. Surprise and consternation found them completely unprepared and engulfed them. No matter how many thousand times the tantalizing Heath had expatiated to the hungry McIntyre on the glories of the magic land where fragrant hams grew on

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trees and cooling beer flowed in the river, McIntyre's pained writhings were no less acute. No matter how many times the gaudy Heath had enticed the timid McIntyre away from the comfortable livery stable to the glamor of a minstrel show that invariably stranded, McIntyre's gullibility was no wit dimmed, nor was there any less poignancy in his disillusioned lament, "If evah Ah get back to dat livah stable!"

There was no such thing as having seen McIntyre and Heath. There was always a new facet to be revealed. They were extraordinary in that they were both comedians though, as vaudeville two-men acts were known in that day, McIntyre would be considered the comedian and Heath the straight man. Heath, as was the design of those acts, built up the situation which McIntyre capped with the laughs. But Heath's apparent straight work was done with such sense of fun, relish and conviction that there were often discussions as to which was the greater comedian. There was only one answer: They both were. They came as nearly being one as any combination of actors I have ever

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seen. And this in spite of the fact that for years they did not see or speak to each other except on the stage.

Another great two-men team was Howard and North. Their act, with slight variations, was always the same. Howard was the small-town boy who had gone to the city and made good. He returned an overdressed braggart, and tried to smother the bucolic North with his urban experience and superiority, the quiet North, meanwhile, gently moving a baby carriage to and fro, and in homely phrases puncturing the city windbag with Socratic philosophy. Could they be seen too often? Not by me.

Years later, after Howard and North had given up the stage, I tried to get North to play Clem Hawley in Don Marquis' *Old Soak*. He was living out his philosophy, however. He had retired to the depths of Long Island, and spent his days on a cracker barrel in the village store. He wouldn't even come to the city to talk about the engagement. He couldn't be bothered.

A famous team of a different type was Clayton White and Marie Stuart, who played in what was known as a parlor

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fancy set, which meant that they wore evening clothes. Miss Stuart was the gay woman of the world, who sang naughty French songs delightfully. She had encountered White, who was a prize-fight trainer, and, being amused by his drollness, had invited him to call. To her surprise he appeared looking quite debonair and handsome in evening clothes.

"Aren't you afraid you'll catch cold without your sweater?" she asked.

"Don't worry, lady, I've got it on underneath," winked White. And then the badinage started between as gifted and ingratiating a pair as one could hope to meet. Change that act? Why? When can we ever see enough of that?

Change Your Act was the title of the act used by another rare pair, Victor Moore and Emma Littlefield. They were supposed to be newcomers, trying to break into vaudeville. After many vicissitudes Mrs Littlefield started her dance, for which much was hoped. But there was no spotlight. The timid Moore, who, even in those days, was mostly hips, would waddle to the footlights and beseech the spotlight man in the gallery, as though reluctant to remind him,

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"Mister, hey, mister, spotlight, you know, mister, you know like we rehearsed—spotlight." Moore's ingratiating, supplicating smile withered with the spotlight man's loud retort: "Ah, take her back to the farm and let the sun shine on her." Victor Moore in his later hilarious moments was never funnier than in his effort to take that insult as though it were a pleasantry.

And there was Tom Nawn in *The Auld Neighborhood*, an exponent of the art that we were years later to hail in the Irish Players. And likewise Roger Imhoff, and Tommy Ryan, of Ryan and Richfield, who hilariously defeated his socially aspiring daughters' efforts to make him a drawing-room pet.

There was Will Creasy, a down-Easter of the Denham Thompson school, who crackled like Calvin Coolidge in a timeless sketch called *Town Hall Tonight*.

And there was Willard Simms in a sketch called *The Paper Hanger*, who splashed paste from Maine to California dozens of times, all the time warbling distorted operatic sounds. With each new difficulty he improvised a new

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theme. He had an encore in which, with hand on hip and standing on one spot, he imitated an entire musical-comedy chorus doing a military song with emphatic marching steps, all the time singling out men in the audience and beaming upon them, suddenly stopping and calling to an imaginary girl at the other end of the line, "Carrie, your Jewish friend's out front."

Among the most popular teams were Ed and Libbie Blondell. He a stout, mature man playing a youthful country bumpkin, and she a saucy wench drawing out his rather pathetic confidences. At one point he told her about the simple beauties of his home back on the farm. Finally, carried away by his touching recollections, he said, "You know, the sun sets about a mile and a half from our house."

There was a strange and wistful comedian, named Charley Case, a very light colored man who concealed himself under black cork, wore simple black clothes and a frizzled wig. He was an extremely nervous man, who never in all his years recovered from stage fright. He didn't know what to do with his hands so he used a piece of string which

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he twined and untwined around his black-gloved fingers during the course of his act. He told stories of his family and sang songs about them, all in a shaky, uncertain voice. One unforgettable story was about his mother's uncanny gift for diagnosis.

"You know it's a funny thing about my mother. She can always tell when Father's drunk. We hear a noise at the door. Mother goes to the door, opens it, looks out and says, 'Boys, your father's drunk.' We look at him. We can't tell. We think he's dead." And there was the glowing description of Father as an animal trainer, how he put the fiercest of them through their stunts, how fearless and masterful he was. Of course complete enjoyment of the performance was slightly marred by the fact that only Father saw the animals.

In a weak and trembling voice Charley blasted all sentimental songs by singing of "That little old red merino dress my sister wore." The words made no sense. There was no attempt at meter. The music went wherever Charley's voice happened to go. The effect was unforgettable. It was caricature and travesty far more devastating than masters of

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these arts had conceived. He was a timid commentator whose unblazoned thoughts were dynamite. He was the great master of unexpected statement. Naturally, wit so unlabeled did not always register. At one Monday matinee in Cleveland his act got no response. The assemblage, largely women and children, was puzzled but in no sense delighted. I went backstage as he came off to tell him that he would find things better for the balance of the engagement. When I saw him I did not disturb him. He stood with his face buried in a brick corner and was muttering, "Charley Case, you're rotten. Your whole damn family is rotten. Your jokes are rotten. Everything about you is rotten. Go back home to Lockport and stay there. Lockport is where you belong. You're rotten. Your whole damn family's rotten. Who cares about them or you?" etc. By the end of the week he was feeling much better.

There was a sepulchral and ministerial gentleman named James Thornton. There still is, as a matter of fact, but his monologist days are over. One of his favorite openings was "The subject of our discourse this evening, ladies and

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gentlemen, is Roman barbarism—Roman barbarism. [Pause] I went into a barber shop this morning,” etc. Years later Jim came into my office, and told me of a harrowing experience he had had the night before. He was appearing at a lodge entertainment in Hoboken. The platform was on top of the front row. “As I began my act,” said Jim, “a large German woman, sitting in the front row with a baby, unbuttoned her dress and exposed ample sustenance. She frightened me. I didn’t know what was expected of me.”

There came one week to the Cleveland theater a child impersonator named Little Elsie. Very little was known of her, and her advance billing was inconspicuous. At her first performance she realized the vaudevillian’s dream of stopping the show. She did impersonations of Anna Held, George M. Cohan, Sam Bernard and others. She danced and sang with complete assurance, and was obviously a prodigy. Her mother stood in the wings and helped her with the quick changes. Also the mother went through the complete performance with the child on the stage, singing the songs, doing the dances, oblivious to everything but the child. The

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relationship between the two had a Svengali-Trilby likeness.

On the same bill with Little Elsie was an armless wonder named Unthan. He did incredible things with his half-stockinged feet, shuffled and dealt cards, shattered objects with a rifle, handled knife and fork and coffee cups, in fact, used his feet as dexterous hands.

Unthan was featured in the billing. After the first performance a very angry woman appeared at the front of the house and said her child would not appear that night if she was to be billed beneath that armless freak. She was finally pacified. She was Little Elsie's mother. Little Elsie was later known as Elsie Janis.

In the same season came an act known as The Five Columbians, with a tiny sprite scarcely more than three who, with shimmering ballet skirt and little diaphanous wings at her shoulders, did toe dances on fairy feet. She grew up to be Marilyn Miller.

And there were the Nichols Sisters, two girls in ebony make-up who were the less blatant forerunners of the harmony sisters of today.

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And Clarice Vance, a tall, serene woman who was one of the first to know the effectiveness of talking songs.

And Walter C. Kelly, the Virginia judge, supreme master of many dialects, who spread darky humor throughout the English-speaking world.

And there was Cole and Johnson, colored singers and musicians, featuring their own compositions, chief of which was "Under the Bamboo Tree."

There was another colored team, always successful, but never accorded much recognition in salary or billing, Cooper and Robinson. Years later, when almost an old man, Bill Robinson found his place, not that he had changed. Appreciation of his artistry finally woke up.

Another newcomer of that year was an eloquent and provocative singer and comedienne named Nora Bayes. She had not yet been heard of in New York. She had a gift for melody and interpretation which has not since been equaled. The harvest moon will shine on Nora's memory as long as anyone who heard her lives.

These, my boy, and scores of their fellows were artists.

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We shall not look upon their like again, for their training ground is gone.

I must tell you the story of the legitimate star and the hoofer. The hoofer and his wife for some years had been doing a successful if rather minor song-and-dance act. Like many of his type he was illiterate, but he did have an inordinate respect for what he considered the great people of the legitimate theater. They, to him, were the royalty of the stage. A legitimate star whose beams for sometime has been diminishing consented for a large salary to descend into vaudeville with a one-act play. It happened that on the day of his debut he was preceded on the program by the hoofer. The latter was thrilled with the idea of being on the same bill with Mr Star. When his act was finished, he hurried to a spot in the wings from which he could watch his idol. It was soon apparent that the idol's act wasn't going very well. The hoofer's heart sank, and the further the act progressed the lower it sank. When the act came to a dismal end the hoofer was so hurt that he felt he must say an encouraging word to Mr Star.

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He approached the frowning failure and as lightly as he could said, "Don't pay any attention to that audience. They're always tough on Monday afternoon, particularly for dramatic sketches. Say, you've got a great act there. By the end of the week you'll be a riot. I'm telling you—a riot."

Mr Star frowned down upon the hoofer and very rudely cut him off with "Don't be an ass. It's over their heads." With a completely disillusioned look the hoofer came back, "Well, maybe they ducked it."

In later years, when I produced ambitious failures and was told in consolation that they were over the heads of the public, I was prevented from feeling sorry for myself by remembering the words of the hoofer.



OF COURSE you realize that the grave state you were in had nothing to do with your illness. It was an infection that the healthiest man might have contracted and might well have succumbed to, but now that you have survived it can assail you no more. I shall never forget Dr Tanner's ceaseless vigil. The source of the man's vitality is inexplicable. He seems to need neither rest nor food. When life was flowing from you he would hold your hands firmly in his and after a breathless eternity you would seem to revive. There are transfusions other than blood. Of course I believe that you glimpsed another world. There were times when only a thread of you was in this one. And that you found that world beautiful I can also believe. I have seen a number

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of people die, and occasionally, just before death there came an expression of gentle delight, as though, in passing, they had seen or heard unexpected and welcome invitation. There may be kindly spirits who come to receive us and reveal to us that death has no sting.

On what grounds can we believe that spiritual guidance ceases with death? Is it not likely to become stronger and clearer with the spirit's release from the body that has been its constant encumbrance? How can we believe that the spirit dies when the spirit of men long dead is still with us? But will we know who we are after death? I see no importance in that. We have doubtless lived other lives before this one, but our inability to identify ourselves with those lives in no wise disturbs us. If we are content here with the obliteration of past identity why should we not be equally content in the hereafter?

Or do you doubt that we have lived before? Then how can we explain the vast differences in people if all were born with no past experience, no previously acquired adaptability or predilection? On all sides do we not see that some souls

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are young and some are old? Did this great difference in maturity arise in a single lifetime? Was the wisdom of Christ that baffled scholars in His youth acquired in twelve years? If so, why have not many men since, or many before, acquired that wisdom?

Was the love of Lincoln the flower of a single growth or the blossoming of many growths? If not, why have there in all history been so few Lincolns? Were the voices that guided Joan of Arc audible to other ears? If so, she might not have been burned to death. She had no proof. Could the cruelty of a Nero or a Caligula or a Peter the Great be the product of a single lifetime capable of producing many counterparts? If so, why are they looked upon as monstrosities?

Could a seven-year-old boy in that brief time sufficiently learn the intricacies of chess to simultaneously play against ten masters of the game and defeat them all?

Was Napoleon the product of audacity? The world has never lacked audacious people, but has produced only one Napoleon.

Were any of these people conscious of previous existence

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or experience? They have not said so. They may have had intimations of destiny coming from an untraceable source, but knowledge of the source was not necessary.

There may be a disquieting moment after death when we realize the waste we made of the gifts with which we were equipped upon entering life, but even the impact of that revelation would be lessened by the fact that in life we had been uncomfortably conscious of our squanderings.

When quite young I came face to face with death in rather an unusual way. For three months I awaited what I believed to be a death sentence. In an earlier letter I told you how my mother so shielded me against my father's correction that I became a point of issue between them, probably the only one they had known. The reason for my mother's unexplainable attitude was now to be made plain to me.

When I reached twelve, my mother for some months had been seriously ill. Though baffling to specialists, her illness was not looked upon as fatal. Yet she knew that it was. One day she took me aside and told me that she was not going to get well, and there was something I must know. She told

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me of my having been very ill with pneumonia when a baby, so ill that death seemed certain. After battling my illness night and day in what seemed a hopeless fight, she went into another room and asked God to spare me. After long supplication she heard a voice which asked if she would be willing to have me die at the age brother David had died if I were then spared. She said she would. In her belief, the compact had been made and would be fulfilled. My recovery set in immediately. I was now approaching the age at which David had died, was within three months of it. She knew that she would not be with me then. My reaction was not one of fear, but rather one of loyalty to her. I felt willing to face any compact she had made. Now I understood the favoritism that she had always shown me, the favoritism my father could not understand and which I mistook. We never spoke of it again. To me it was a secret that could not be divulged. About three weeks later she died. Her last days were in coma, but in some far region of her mind there awakened old Welsh songs that she had not sung since a child. In a weak voice she sang snatches of them. On the

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last morning she called for me. I was taken to her. She held my hand, and tried to say something but could not. Afterward I felt that possibly in her wanderings she had found that what she feared for me was not to happen, and in one last vain effort tried to tell me. Or maybe she was only trying to give me strength. I was not to know. Her death left our home desolate. My father sat quiet and alone. He did not weep. Nor did he seek comfort. He spoke to no one. Mechanically he moved through the days of mourning. There was no consolation for him in the words of the minister or the songs of the choir. He did not hear them. He was far away, alone.

The following weeks were dreamlike and unreal. Behind was the departure of my mother, ahead my own. I went through all the usual motions of going to school, participating in games, celebrating my last Thanksgiving Day. Our Christmas was not so merry that year, but we kept up the old semblance. I remember thinking of it as my last, and only I knew it. The day now was fast approaching. I felt perfectly well. I began wondering how death was to come.

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On the eve of the day I was still well. Now I wondered what accident was to befall me. The day came. I went to school. The day ended. There was no accident. And then I felt that perhaps it was not to be exactly on the day. Not until another month was I convinced that it was not to be. Either my mother in her distraction had imagined the compact, or it had been abrogated. I had faced death, and found nothing frightening in the prospect.

My father was a difficult man to know. Toward his children he was undemonstrative, and whatever tribulations he may have had he never revealed. Perhaps my relationship to him was complicated by a sense of being an interloper between him and my mother. In my case, as I have revealed, there were other reasons than those usually offered by the psychoanalysts in these cases.

I shall always remember the first time I went away from home to enter preparatory school. My train was leaving after lunch. My father waited, and walked to the station with me. He had never advised me seriously, and all the way to the station I kept thinking, "Surely he will say something

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now," but nothing of consequence was said. We stood on the station platform, waiting for a time, and still no advice or admonition was forthcoming. The train came in. He walked to the car with me. As I got to the bottom step, he said, "Well, my boy, don't make a damn fool of yourself." Certainly no more difficult advice was ever offered anyone, and try as I would I was never able to live up to it, though on one or two occasions it has saved me.

The first time that I really got an intimation of my father's love was when I was about eighteen and confined in a hospital with a serious attack of typhoid. The hospital was an hour's ride from our home. One morning at four o'clock Father appeared at the hospital and insisted on seeing me. I was awake, and asked the nurse to have him come in. He came into the room, covered his concern with a few casual words and left, but I knew that he had lost his usual stern control and had had to leave his bed and make certain himself that I was all right. Hospital reports did not pacify him.

A few years later he suffered a minor but troublesome discomfort of which the doctors said he could be quickly

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relieved by a simple operation. On the afternoon he was to leave for the hospital I arranged to go with him. When he got into the carriage he sat with his back to the driver, which puzzled me. As we drove away I saw him gazing back at the house. His eyes filled with tears. I had never seen him cry before. I sensed that he had a premonition. His gaze was definitely a farewell. I said to him, "If you feel that way, let's go back. You don't have to have the operation."

"I'll be all right," he said. "This operation will be nothing at all." But I knew that he felt differently. He did not survive the anesthetic. I have always wished that I could have found a closer relationship with him, but it was not to be. There is a great deal of unexpressed love in the world. It is one of the chief causes of sorrow evoked by death. What might have been said or might have been done that never can be said or done.

YES, I HEARD the radio sermon you speak of.

His saying that many people could no longer look upon the injustice of the world because they were too tenderhearted reminded me of the old story of the rich man who was confronted in his library by a destitute man, whose outpourings of woe so tortured the rich man that with agonized face he summoned his servants and sobbed, "Show him out. He's breaking my heart." Who would have thought that hoary bit of irony would ever be used as the text of a sermon?

You ask what brought me to New York. I was engaged by a syndicate, that had a circuit of summer amusement parks, to book their attractions, which consisted chiefly of concert bands, animal acts, acrobats, aerialists, high-wire

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walkers, high divers and the various daredevils who were supposed to look into the mouth of death but who, as a matter of fact, looked only into the gaping mouths of people.

I opened an office in New York. There came into the office one day a young man who wanted engagements to give exhibition flights in a heavier-than-air machine which he himself had designed and built. His name was Roy Knabenshue. He had made several more or less successful flights in the West but was as yet unknown. He assured me he could make an hour's flight any time between any given points. I asked him if he could fly down Broadway, circle the Flat-iron Building and return up Fifth Avenue. He said he could. I told him if he did that he would be on every front page in America, and that engagements should then be easily secured. His machine, which was a dirigible, and the necessary equipment were at his home in Toledo, but he did not have sufficient funds to bring them on. He estimated that the cost of transportation and setting up would be two thousand dollars.

We finally hit upon the idea of trying to induce a New

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York newspaper to pay for the exploit. I went to see a Mr. Chamberlain, then in charge of the Hearst interests in New York, and outlined the plan to him. He knew about Knabenshue and thought the idea might be good.

"How much?" he said.

"Fifty thousand," I said.

"We'll give you five thousand," he said.

"We'll take it," I said, which I have always thought was a record for no haggling. However, Mr Chamberlain did improve the offer by agreeing to pay twenty-five hundred dollars each for two additional flights.

In due time Knabenshue had his machine set up in a vacant lot at Broadway and Sixtieth Street. The afternoon after his arrival he soared out of the lot to an altitude of about fifteen hundred feet, flew down Broadway, circled the Flatiron Building, flew back up Fifth Avenue, circled Central Park and settled down in his tent hangar. The affairs of the city were stopped instantly. People stood in amazement, staring up at the new wonder. Streetcars stopped. All traffic stopped. The city stood still and rubbed its eyes. A

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few hours later Knabenshue, having nothing to do, made the flight again. In the space of a few days he flew over the city dozens of times. He was the sensation of the hour. The newspapers of this country and Europe were full of his achievement. Within a week he had been booked in parks and state and county fairs for the balance of the season at prices ranging from three to five thousand dollars a week. The penniless inventor, who not long before had been looked upon as a sorry crank, returned to New York in late October a world-famed and comparatively affluent man. Success had settled upon worthy shoulders. He was gentle, gifted and fearless. His modesty remained unshaken. He flew dirigibles for several years after that, then became associated with the Wright Brothers in airplane development and is still, I believe, with that company.

After several years the amusement-park business suffered a collapse, and I found myself in the booking department of the Orpheum Circuit, which controlled the vaudeville business of the West. It had been built up by Martin Beck, a forceful character who had placed those theaters on a

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dignified as well as a prosperous plane. He had no traffic with the shoddy or the vulgar.

The search for talent kept me in vaudeville theaters the greater part of the time. It was at about this time that there was an influx of English music-hall stars, chief of which was Harry Lauder. I saw his opening performance at the New York Theatre when the audience kept him on the stage for an hour and a quarter. He was a supreme artist. Every song was a full character study, the characters all Scotch but widely varied. He had a complete submergence of self into character only equaled in this type of work by Raquel Meller, whom I was to see in France years later.

There was a riotous low-comedy English pantomime called *Night in a Music Hall*, featuring an actor named Billie Reeves, but taking no trouble to mention a strange and comic sprite named Charlie Chaplin.

It was at about this time that Bert Williams, foremost of all colored comedians, began making single appearances following the death of his prancing partner, Walker.

An agent named Mort Shea happened in at a rodeo at

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Madison Square Garden. There was a roper and trick lassoist who caught Shea's eye. With difficulty he was persuaded by Shea not to return to Oklahoma immediately but try a week in vaudeville. Shea booked him at Hammerstein's. He was supposed to do a dumb act, but occasionally, when he missed a trick, he made an embarrassed comment that was invariably droll.

His vaudeville career continued. He roped less and talked more. Finally he gave up roping altogether, confining himself to various lasso manipulations while commenting on the world in general. He became a great figure in American life. His name was Will Rogers. I have often wondered what his life would have been if Shea had not detained him for that week in vaudeville.

It once occurred to me that our theater might attract a new clientele if we reached out for the followers of Elbert Hubbard, at this time a highly popular biographer, essayist and lecturer. Hubbard was a minor American Voltaire, and he followed his master's footsteps by establishing a kind of Ferney at East Aurora, N. Y. There was a community of

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craftsmen who did fine hand press work, beautiful bindings, made furniture and various decorative household articles. There was an inn for the accommodation of admirers who made pilgrimage to the master's community. Hubbard was a prolific writer, turning out two magazines a month, *The Philistine* and *The Fra*, composed for the most part of his own contributions. His writings were a combination of iconoclasm and optimism liberally sprinkled with the reassurances that make life worth while to the believers in the various new-thought cults. His masterpiece in the latter vein was a pamphlet called *A Message to Garcia*, which for a time was practically required reading for everyone in the country. He was a kindly and amusing lecturer, who left his hearers with a sense of warmth that made the world seem more friendly.

His manner and material were utterly alien to vaudeville, and the thought of engaging him suggested various unpleasant outcomes, but I felt that his success was assured if his followers could be attracted into vaudeville theaters.

I wrote to him, broaching the idea, and after some corre-

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spondence he invited me to East Aurora for a week end. He was a delightful host. On the first evening he sat before a great fireplace surrounded by adoring pilgrims and led the general conversation into various paths of discussion. He had an encyclopedic memory, and seemed to have freshly read all history and biography. He recalled to one the old masters who sat with their pupils at their feet.

After breakfast the next morning there was a three-hour walk through the woods with The Fra expatiating on the mysterious ways of nature.

After luncheon he asked me to meet him at one of the offices away from the inn, and when I arrived he and Mrs Hubbard were there. Mrs Hubbard was a tall, slender, esthetic woman of great charm. In earlier days she and Hubbard had been victims of scandal. Hubbard, a married man, had fallen in love with this school teacher. His wife refused him a divorce. He gave up his business, soap manufacturing, left his home and started a new life with his new companion, both unafraid. They left everything behind and began to carve out his new career. Some years later they were married. Their life had completely refuted all slander.

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He asked me to explain fully the project to Mrs Hubbard, saying that the decision would be hers. After I had finished, Mrs Hubbard asked a few questions and then said they would give me an answer in a few days. Mr Hubbard's acceptance came. He was to play twenty weeks at a thousand dollars a week. His opening engagement was at the Majestic Theatre, Chicago. He was a great success. He attracted many people who had never been in the theater before. We looked forward with high hopes to the rest of his tour, but on the following week received a severe jolt. His second engagement was in Cincinnati, opening Sunday afternoon. The gallery of this theater was notoriously unruly. Hubbard used no make-up or stage attire. He wore his hair quite long and this with a flowing necktie gave him an unusual appearance, particularly to a Sunday-afternoon gallery in Cincinnati. He had scarcely started when he was rudely interrupted. He looked at the gallery, calmly walked off the stage and out of the theater. When the management made a search for him they found that he had gone back to East Aurora. I reached him by telephone the following day. He was not in the least upset by his experience, but he said he thought it was better

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for him not to annoy Cincinnati. He agreed to resume his tour the following week in Indianapolis, and from there on there were no further mishaps. He was warmly welcomed every place. He took a great fancy to vaudeville people, and upon his return devoted an issue of *The Fra* to those he had met, sending to each of them a specially bound limp-leather copy.

A few years later, after the outbreak of the war, he wrote me that he and Mrs Hubbard were considering a trip to Europe to study war conditions. He asked my opinion. I urged him to go, as I felt his views would be especially interesting and important to many people. I saw them the day they sailed. Their ship was the *Lusitania*. The last account of them was that they stood quietly side by side at the rail as the ship went down. Thus ended an unpropitious romance that had completely changed and enriched two lives, an enrichment that spread to many others.

While with the Orpheum Circuit I wrote a one-act play called *Thunder God* for Blanche Walsh, a star of the legitimate. It was rather an ambitious effort, but successful. This

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led to my going into the production of vaudeville acts, a training that I found interesting and valuable. Among those whom I presented in acts written by myself or others were Bertha Kalich, Virginia Harned, Mrs Louise James, Arnold Daly and William S. Hart.

It was at this time that I met Everett Shinn, the painter, who had been writing travesties for private presentation by artists. In his cast were James Preston, May Preston, Mr and Mrs W. L. Glackens, Ben Ali Haggin and others. He had struck an entirely fresh and absurd vein of travesty of the old melodrama. His repertoire consisted of *More Sinned Against Than Usual*, *Wrong from the Start* and *The Prune Hater's Daughter*.

I produced *More Sinned Against Than Usual* in vaudeville, and it was highly successful. I introduced a new character, a small violinist, who was an exact replica of the towering villain and who dogged his steps throughout the act, playing appropriate villain music to the accompaniment of all speeches and gestures. The act was very successful in the East, but with its progress West the laughter diminished.

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The melodrama began to be taken seriously. A Northwest house manager's report on the act rather ruefully said: "This is a fine act, but our audience is inclined to laugh at it."

This was followed by *Wrong from the Start* which, after long success in America, played two years in England.

Shinn and I became close friends, and lived together for a year. While spending a summer in the country we were asked to appear at a church benefit. I wrote an act for two men called *Moonshine*, which was later played in vaudeville by William S. Hart and which is still being played by amateur groups in America and England. When I receive royalty payments from Yorkshire and Lancashire towns I wonder just how the North Carolina moonshiner and the revenue officer look and sound in those village halls.

There was, sometime after this, a famous ballroom dancing team, Vernon and Irene Castle, who became the rage of Paris and New York. Suddenly magazines and newspapers were flooded with photographs and accounts of them. Every conceivable article was named after them, and Mrs Castle, whose hair was bobbed, started that fashion through-

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out the land. There was the Castle bob, the Castle walk, the Castle glide. The country was what the high-pressure salesman calls Castle conscious. It seemed to me that something ought to be done about that, so I conceived the idea of sending them on what we later modestly called a whirlwind tour. Their manager was Elisabeth Marbury, a play agent and later a democratic political leader. I asked Miss Marbury for an appointment, and when ushered into her office saw a stout, genial woman looking very much like an industrial tycoon. When I was seated she threw one plump leg over the other, leaned back in her chair and boomed out, "Well, Hopkins, what do you want?"

My response was to burst out laughing and I said, "Well, if we get no further than this it was worth-while coming." I outlined the plan to her. The Castles were to go on tour with the best orchestra we could find, play only the large cities and no city more than one day. Miss Marbury thought it sounded mad, but I persuaded her to talk to the Castles about it. Vernon Castle was enthusiastic about the idea, so arrangements were made. I sent men out to rent the largest

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auditoriums and theaters, the tour to open in Boston and extend West to Kansas City and Minneapolis. We engaged Europe's orchestra, which was the great dance orchestra of that day. About a week before we opened it suddenly dawned on us that at best we had only about three quarters of an hour of entertainment. The Castles could do all their numbers in less than fifteen minutes. We were allowing an additional fifteen minutes for the orchestra. Eight couples of dance instructors from the Castle School were to give a fifteen-minute demonstration of the right and wrong ways of dancing. We needed another half hour at least.

Castle hit upon a happy idea. We would hold a contest in each city, the winning couple to receive the Castle Cup. We further elaborated on this by arranging to bring all the cup winners to New York at our expense and hold a final contest at Madison Square Garden for the awarding of the grand cup. The tour opened at the Boston Opera House. We were sold out in advance for matinee and night performances. Castle kept the contestants dancing long enough to fill out the performance, finding it difficult to reach decisions.

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Audiences were delighted. From Boston we went to Philadelphia, playing two performances at the Academy of Music, where firemen stopped the sale of standing room. The following afternoon we played the National Theatre, Washington, that evening the Academy of Music, Baltimore. Reports from ahead indicated complete sellouts.

Then came the first threat to our tour. From Baltimore we went to Pittsburgh, playing Carnegie Music Hall. Here there was no stage, only a platform. While we were trying to make it look like something by decorating it with plants, Mrs Castle stormed in. She and Castle had been having personal difficulties during the tour. Now things had culminated. She was leaving. She was going back to New York that morning. I was not in a particularly good mood. Sleepers leave me irritable, and there was the additional difficulty of trying to give a decent show on a platform. So when her outburst was over I said, "I don't blame you. I'm sick of it too. Let's all go home." The effect was electrical. Her anger disappeared. She told me it would be foolish to give up the tour. Finally, I let her persuade me. From

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then on to the closing night in Madison Square Garden there were no more difficulties.

Vernon Castle was a fine fellow of many talents. He enlisted in the aviation service, and being an experienced aviator was sent to Texas to give flying instruction. He was killed saving a student.

Irene Castle had much to do with the changed appearance of womanhood in the following decade. Her boyish bob sent American women scurrying to the hairdressers, many of them for the first time in their lives. The marcel, the wave and all of the following styles are traceable to her. I am also convinced that it was her slender, boyish figure that started the dieting craze that has not yet subsided. The hairdressers, the purveyors of beauty and all of the beneficiaries of woman's new concern about her appearance should erect a monument to Irene Castle. She made them possible.

I previously referred to Raquel Meller, who is to my mind the fully realized music-hall artist. Nearly every night for a month I saw her at the Casino in Cannes, and the spell she wove grew deeper and deeper. Several years later she

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was brought to New York for a limited engagement at the Empire Theatre. Before her appearance Alexander Woollcott asked me to write something about her for his column in the N. Y. *World*. Following is the article:

RAQUEL MELLER

SINCE THE WORD "CONCERT" HAS INEVITABLY BECOME AFFIXED TO THE FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE WHICH RAQUEL MELLER WILL MAKE IN THIS COUNTRY ON APRIL 14, IT WILL PERHAPS BE ENLIGHTENING TO SPREAD THE WORD THAT IT IS PRIMARILY A FINE ACTRESS WHO WILL HOLD THE EMPIRE STAGE THAT NIGHT. THE MORE REASON, THEN, FOR ABDICATING THIS PULPIT THIS MORNING IN FAVOR OF ARTHUR HOPKINS, WHOSE LETTER FOLLOWS:

To the question "Is acting an art?" the best answer I know is Raquel Meller.

So much of acting is entangled with the actor that the two frequently become confused, and one is liable to rate as achievement what is really flashing personality. Oftentimes the per-

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sonality has varying effects, and the person enchanted by the personality pronounces the actor a great artist while the person left cold by it pronounces him a bad actor. They think they have been discussing acting, but as a matter of fact they have been discussing personality.

And again we have the actor who is a part-time artist. He has at moments a great truth and beauty of which he as a person is no part, but the moments are all too brief and infrequent. Yet, fortunately, for him, he is remembered by his divine moments.

We have cunning actors, shrewd actors, actors who have spent their lives in polishing and exhibiting Técla pearls. They have a kind of success, sometimes a definite vogue, but ultimately spread more disappointment than joy.

All of these actors in one quarter or another are considered artists. Yet to me none of them are artists, for they lack either the imagination, the integrity or the courage of the true artist.

They are afraid of failure. They believe it is an artist's duty to make good, which is the least thing that any artist can take

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into account. An artist's treasure lies inward and he never will find the best of it if he looks outward.

In Raquel Meller we find the artist freed. Her every song seems a fine flight away from mundane reality into a new and blazing reality which somehow seems a part of all time and place.

And the flight seems to be into herself. The beautiful, graceful woman fades away, and one feels only the embodiment of gay, poignant, sullen, grieving, tragic emotions. And the body thus abandoned finds a new and glorious grace. Its motions are effortless. The face looks far, far away. The hands are like faces.

And Raquel Meller finally drifts back to her body. The song is over, but you feel you never again will get quite back to the same place you were when her flight began.

It is unfortunate her New York appearances are to be so few and costly. All people engaged in the arts should see her. I fear they, least of all, will have the opportunity. On the other hand, she may pierce a few stiff shirts that are sadly in need of it.

ARTHUR HOPKINS.

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IT IS A SOURCE OF SATISFACTION TO ME TO KNOW THAT THE BEST ESSAY ON THE ART OF ACTING TO BE PUBLISHED IN A NEW YORK NEWSPAPER IN MY TIME SHOULD APPEAR IN THIS DEPARTMENT, EVEN IF IT SO HAPPENS THAT I DID NOT WRITE IT MYSELF. THERE IS, I SUPPOSE, SOMETHING SALUTARY IN AN OCCASIONAL REMINDER TO THOSE AUTOMATIC WRITERS, THE INK-STAINED WRETCHES OF PARK ROW AND FLEET STREET, THAT THE BEST WORK IS QUITE LIKELY TO BE DONE BY THE MAN WHO NEVER WRITES ANYTHING UNLESS HE HAS SOMETHING TO SAY.

ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT.

DR TANNER is pleased with your progress. Maybe the night will not be as long as we thought. In the meantime, your adjustment to it relieves the darkness. I am not sure that I shall grieve for you again. For some reason, entirely aside from your improved condition, I feel happy about you. It must be your own revelation of understanding that no physical condition can alter. It is as though you had passed your body on a journey and were not retarded by its fretful plea. It might even be that it will find strength to follow you.

Am glad you liked the vaudeville people.

It was not a long step from vaudeville production to the production of plays. As I observed the legitimate theater it seemed to me that there was much that was archaic. It

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did not carry the conviction of the best vaudeville acting. Scenes, treated seriously, frequently verged on the ridiculous. Many phrasings were so stilted that they defeated any sense of authenticity. They were words to which the author had fallen easy victim, not helped in the least by the actors' solemn emphasis. The stage seemed overcluttered with detail, and the movement of actors so incessant and mechanical as to make them seem like checker men being frantically manipulated. While the text was supposed in most cases to be realistic its treatment had little semblance of actuality. The influence of the old extravagant melodramatic theater still held sway over material to which it was not only unsuited but which it grossly distorted. My greatest difficulty in the early plays was to convert actors with treasured vocal equipment to read simply and to persuade them to abandon their pedestrian habits, to stand still or sit still while playing scenes not calling for movement. The most frequent request was, "Can't I walk on this line?" to which I would reply, "Let's not walk on the line. Let's help it." And to persuade actors to abandon scores of trick movements and gestures

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which they had carefully cultivated and used in whatever part they happened to play was the breaking down of adhesions, always a painful process to the one in whom they have grown. You must not think this was true of all actors. It was true of almost none of the great ones, but it was true of the majority. There was a well-founded suspicion that some of the stars encouraged overplaying on the part of their associates to give greater emphasis to their own less vigorous methods.

The day had not yet come when every part in a play, no matter how small, was considered important, and when all actors in a company were treated with equal consideration. Today only the sycophantic director shows discrimination. The theater is essentially group work and no one should be permitted to feel insignificant. The important line in a play is the line that is being said. It is not the leading parts in plays that are invariably remembered. Some unforgettable performances have been in smaller parts. The first time I saw Lionel Barrymore he had one scene as an organ-grinder in *The Mummy and the Humming Bird*. He is all of the play

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that I remember, and though he has created a number of magnificent roles since then, it is this part that invariably comes first to my mind.

It was in a small part in *The Talker* that I first saw Pauline Lord, and I determined then to find a greater opportunity for her someday. It was in the part of the young girl in *A Bill of Divorcement* that Katharine Cornell revealed the future that was to be hers. And as an unknown, with Henry Miller and Blanche Bates in *The Rainbow*, Ruth Chatterton's star blazed forth. In a minor part with Laurette Taylor, another unknown, Lynn Fontanne, revealed the light that now shines so brightly.

After the production of *The Poor Little Rich Girl*, of which I spoke in a previous letter, I went to Europe to see the English, French and German theaters. It was in Germany that I was particularly impressed, as much by the audiences as by the stage. This was the period just before the war, when the German theater had reached its highest expression. Reinhardt was doing impressive things at the Deutsches Theater and the Kammerspiel. I saw Moissi in Tolstoy's

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The Living Corpse and *Faust*. Here was the actor I had dreamed of. Here was the blending of acting and truth that eliminated the man and left only the disembodied character.

There are various theories of why people become actors, from the exhibitionistic urge to a desire to sleep late mornings. It is my own belief that the chief urge, whether the actor realizes it or not, is to find other experiences by living other lives, the joy that children get in pretending to be what they are not. There is good reason why acting is called playing. The chief defect of most acting is that the sense of play has gone out of it. The actor does not take advantage of the opportunity to become another person. In all parts he remains largely himself. The wings are there but he will not use them. He is a victim of self-consciousness. He is always thinking of how he seems.

People marvel at the talent of child actors, forgetting that all children have easy access to the land of pretense. As they grow older and adjust themselves to an external world these accesses are gradually closed to them, which explains why the most competent child actors rarely show talent in

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maturity. A critic recently sought to prove that the ability shown by child actors pretty clearly demonstrates that there is little to this whole fetish of stage training and experience. It is for him to realize that training and experience are largely aimed at recapturing in adult life some of the child's easy gift for make-believe which he admires so much. It is here again that Christ's sesame applies, "Be ye as little children." How often have we heard actors described as "only children." Some actors foolishly resent this. It is the highest compliment that can be paid them.

Moissi was an adult artist with the child's gift. All that he was doing became real to him. The world in which he lived disappeared. The world he created became so real that the spectator was lifted into it. That is what is meant by "carrying an audience away" by "transports." That is the magic of acting.

There were vibrant performances of Ibsen and Hauptmann at the Lessing Theater and at another theater a breathless rendition without movement or action, Schnitzler's *Dr Bernardi*.

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What struck me most in the German theater was its adult tone. It had progressed far beyond being a place of amusement. Its audiences were serious and cultured. They never interrupted with applause or audible comment. One having the temerity to make a noise would be instantly shushed on all sides. There were no latecomers, no early departures. The performance of *Faust* began at six o'clock. Ten minutes before, the packed house was seated, and was still seated at twelve o'clock when the curtain fell. There had been one intermission for beer and sandwiches, served in the foyers. The war brought an end to the German theater, to me one of its great havocs. German audiences felt a lasting indebtedness to those artists who had enriched them.

Dr Walter Damrosch tells a story of Mark Twain attending the opera in Berlin. There was a tenor whose acclaim Twain could not understand. To his bravoing companion he said,

"But he must be over seventy!"

"Ya, ya. Bravo! Bravo!"

"And he sings off key."

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"Ya, but you should have heard him thirty years ago. Bravo! Bravo!"

That is the kind of remembered gratitude that Americans too rarely enjoy.

Deeply impressed by the simplicity and majesty of Reinhardt's productions, which were the first I had seen to be influenced by the art of Gordon Craig, I returned home and discarded all the models that had been made for an elaborate production of *Evangeline* and to some extent, at least, I introduced to America the new scenic act which was to find full expression in the work of Robert Edmond Jones, who joined me two years later. *Evangeline* was a failure, and likewise my following production *We Are Seven*, a charming fantasy by Eleanor Gates.

One day a young law clerk named Elmer Reizenstein came into my office with his first play. It had a novel idea, later used in many ways, that of telling a story backward and dramatizing events already past. I took the play, not knowing how I was going to get it on. It was then that I first met George M. Cohan and Sam Harris, who were then

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in partnership. They liked the play and agreed to do it with me. The play, *On Trial*, was a gratifying success. The unknown author became one of America's foremost playwrights under the name of Elmer Rice. A pleasant outcome of the venture was a friendship that began with Sam Harris, an amusing and lovable man to whom I have been attached ever since.

I saw very little of George M. Cohan, who was occupied with his own plays at the time, and only too rarely have I seen him since. He is the only one of his kind in the theater, has amazing versatility, and is a master actor, a fact that dawned rather slowly on the intelligentsia of New York.

During the rehearsals of *On Trial* the European war broke out. The news was received rather casually. We knew that it could not last more than six months and in no event could it concern America. Compared with our interest in the play, the war seemed unimportant.

The success of *On Trial* resulted in a second then a third company. In casting about for a leading woman of the third company I remembered Pauline Lord. After *The Talker*,

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she had disappeared from sight, and we had some difficulty in finding her. She played the part magnificently, toured the smaller cities for a season, and on her return I assured her that I would find a part for her to originate.

Shortly after this I met Robert Edmond Jones and then began a long, productive and, in some way, epoch-making association. Jones, an unaccountable product of bleak New Hampshire, was the artist born, sensitive, childlike and profound. He had made stage designs in Professor Baker's class at Harvard and had studied the theater abroad. He caught the inner meaning of Gordon Craig's sometimes vague expression of the interpretative possibilities of line, color and light in stage backgrounds. It was a complete departure from the realistic and photographic. It sought to interpret mood and meaning. It was part of the play rather than a place in which the play took place. It required not only understanding and imagination on the part of the artist, but stern self-discipline. He had to discard the merely effective. He had to be as unselfish as the ideal actor. He had to be the medium and not the principal. Therein lies

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its impracticability. Artists of this type appear too seldom to meet the needs of the theater. There are easy compromises that bring the less-imaginative and less-selfish artist success, even acclaim. Jones has had many imitators but his flame cannot be borrowed. Only in him does it glow.

On his return from Europe, he designed the setting and costumes for Granville Barker's *The Man with a Dumb Wife*. Here he revealed a new and striking talent. Following this he designed for me the settings for Edith Ellis' dramatization of *The Devil's Garden* by W. B. Maxwell, and then a magnificent production of *The Happy Ending*, a fantasy of death by L. du Rocher MacPherson.

Following this was a production of *The Deluge*, a brilliant, ironic comedy by Henning Berger, a Swedish novelist who had spent some years of deprivation in Chicago, and after his return to Sweden had written this play of a group of Americans imprisoned in a barroom during a flood in which they seemed doomed. The play dealt with the innate brotherhood that is awakened in people in time of stress, and an ironic last act showed the quick departure from brotherhood

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when danger is past. In this play Pauline Lord played the only woman part, and definitely came into her own. Despite great praise, the play failed. People said it was ahead of its time. I produced it again, six years later. It was still ahead of its time.

A shy and whimsical woman, Claire Kummer, who had a reputation as a composer of sentimental songs, among them the famous "Dearie," came to me with a scenario for a musical play. I persuaded her that it would be better as a play without music. This resulted in *Good Gracious, Annabelle*, a fantastic farce in an entirely new vein, which established Miss Kummer as a playwright. Jones's simple, unadorned designs for this play brought down a storm of critical protest. There was an opportunity to reproduce the famed Peacock Row of the old Waldorf, instead of which Jones provided a simple screenlike background with benches in summer covers, a perfect set to play against. I, too, was soundly criticized for having actors play scenes with their backs to the audience. There, too, were reviews, one by Alexander Woolcott in particular, that hailed the fresh-

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ness of the play and its treatment. The play succeeded.

This was followed by another Kummer play, *A Successful Calamity*, in which William Gillette starred. During rehearsals he was depressed by what seemed to him the extreme laxness of my direction. For years he had directed his own plays and believed, like most directors of that time, in long, arduous rehearsals and meticulous direction. My method was to rehearse steadily for not more than six hours and to give the actor as much creative freedom as possible. I only took hold when I felt the actor was off the track. So far as was feasible, I gave directions privately, as I always disliked correcting an actor before others. My feeling was and is that an actor should not be made self-conscious about a reading or a scene. Open correction makes the rest of the cast his spectators and judges. This is bad for both him and the cast. It is this direction that Dorothy Parker once referred to as absent treatment, and she was right, the more seemingly absent the treatment the less harmful the remedy.

The play opened in Atlantic City, and I thought successfully. Those were the days when it was difficult to secure a

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New York theater, nearly all of which were controlled by Klaw and Erlanger and the Shuberts. Much to my surprise, neither the Erlanger nor Shubert representative liked the play, and my prospects for a New York booking were fading fast. Winthrop Ames, formerly of Boston and the New Theatre, was at that time in control of the Booth Theatre. I informed him of my difficulty and he graciously said he would hold his theater open for me until the following week, when he would see the play in Washington. He came, liked the play, booked it into his theater, where it ran the rest of the season to capacity business. I have never forgotten Mr Ames coming to the rescue of a stranger. High among the friendships I have made in the theater I cherish his. He is a genial and cultured gentleman and, in my opinion, the ablest stage director of our day. At the same time began a delightful friendship with Mr Gillette, another New Englander. When New England passes out virtues it forgets to be frugal.

It is always a pleasure to bring together people that we like and so, my boy, it gives me special joy to bring those friends to you.

YOU ASK why actors of long experience were willing to entrust themselves to the direction of a newcomer. To understand that you must realize that the average actor and particularly the good one approaches each new part with certain trepidation. He is anxious for guidance. If he is to be happy he must feel that the director understands the play and his part. Furthermore, he must feel that the director has faith in him and is anxious for his success. The director who shows open disapproval of an actor can hope for little from him. The actor becomes self-conscious and resentful. He tightens up. He is no longer free to concentrate on his work. His suspicious eye is seeking further evidence of disapproval. I have worked with stars and lesser actors who

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had reputations for being difficult. I have yet to encounter any difficulty with actors in rehearsal. I take pains to tell them when their work is good. That leaves them receptive to corrective advice when some part of their work is not as good as the rest. The actor is early convinced that I want him to succeed. If an actor feels you are with him, he will go a long way with you. Of course this method precludes any attitude of superiority on the part of the director. It is of no use to the stage-struck director who wants to act all the parts, whose unhappiest moment is when the curtain rises on a performance and he cannot be out there acting the play as it should be acted. The director who asks unselfishness of actors, asks them to forget themselves and think only of the play, must set an example of unselfishness. He must forego any temptation to put on an act of his own and impress with his special gifts.

Actors must be freed from fear of themselves. Nearly all temperament is founded on misgivings. It is an outward release of inner torture. It is foolish to mistake this for conceit or unreasonableness. The conceited actor is rarely

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temperamental. He is not sensitive enough to be. The great actors were rarely temperamental. They had found themselves sufficiently to be concerned, but unafraid.

I had the good fortune to come into the theater before some of the great ones had passed and to work with them. Among those were Mrs Fiske, John Drew and Arnold Daly.

In association with George C. Tyler I produced for Mrs Fiske a play by Philip Moeller, *Madame Sand*. Mrs Fiske, a retiring and sensitive little woman, had for years been directed by her husband, Harrison Grey Fiske. She came to the first rehearsal heavily veiled, took me aside, told me of her discomfort in new surroundings, and rather timorously asked me not to correct her too much in the beginning. I told her that it hadn't occurred to me that it would be necessary to correct her at all. After we had rehearsed for a week, in which I had devoted myself entirely to the other actors, she asked me rather reprovingly why I was neglecting her. I said, and honestly, that I wouldn't know just where to start gilding the lily. We became great

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friends. She was a brilliant, humorous and kindly person, completely devoted to the theater in which she actually lived, and with a gift for subtle comedy that has not been equaled in our time.

I saw little of her after the successful run of her play. The closing of a play entails loss that may not be included in financial statements. It is the loss of association with people to whom one has become devoted. Though I have never been an advocate of the repertoire theater, for the reason that I feel that no play should be constricted to the interpretation of a fixed company, I have always deplored the breaking up of groups to which I have become attached.

Only occasionally after our association did I see Mrs Fiske. One morning I read of her death. Feeling ill, she had gone to the simple home of a friend on Long Island. There she closed her sparkling eyes. No newspaper reports of impending death, no hospital or doctor's bulletins. She chose a quiet and graceful exit, as she had so many times in life. Master Will said the world is a stage. Mrs Fiske knew how to leave it.

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Soon after I became associated with another fine artist, Mme Nazimova. She had come to this country some years before with a Russian company headed by her husband. Later she went into the American theater, did some Ibsen in English, and followed with such less literate successes as *Bella Donna*. She went into silent pictures where she had a great vogue, and was anxious once more to do Ibsen. Our initial presentation was a production of *The Wild Duck* for the first time in English. I could not understand why this play had been avoided. It seemed to me quite the finest and tenderest of Ibsen's plays and surpassing all others in comedy. It revealed the Norwegian poet as a man not essentially grim. I wanted Nazimova to play Gina, the mother, but she elected to play the fourteen-year-old Hedvig. The idea was at first startling, but I soon saw the wisdom of it. She was a slight person of no age and an artist who could bring to the part mature understanding. She was one actress who never had to find again the histrionic gifts of childhood. They had never left her. If anything, they had expanded with maturity. She was sensitive, timorous

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and afraid of herself. To this day she has not recovered from stage fright. I have seen her in the wings ten minutes before her first entrance in a part she had played many times suffering such torture of anticipation as to make none of it worth-while. The temptation was to send her to a quiet place in the country and tell her never to be troubled again. Once on the stage she quickly recovered, but the knowledge that this would invariably happen was of no use to her in subsequent appearances.

She never quite lost her accent. Once during rehearsals of *The Wild Duck* she came to me and said one of the comments about Hedvig's fascination by the fire in the stove seemed "too psychopatricks." She didn't like to think of Hedvig as being "psychopatricks." She gave a touching and beautiful performance of Hedvig, following with Hedda and Nora. It did not occur to me to have her play Mrs Alving in *Ghosts*. Years later she showed the full meaning of that guilty and stricken mother, and came into the acclaim that she had been too long denied. I went back to her dressing room after this moving experience. She threw her arms

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around me and said, "Now I am satisfied. Now I never want to do anything again." What a misfortune if this eternally young and vibrant artist were never to do anything again.

At about this time I wrote a book on the theater called *How's Your Second Act?* in which were crystallized my theories of acting, play writing and direction. It was reprinted again two years ago without change, which can either mean that later experience confirmed my beliefs or that my beliefs were so set that experience could not change them. The Welsh are stubborn people, and I have no reason to feel that I escaped this weakness or strength. I believe that in the theater tenacity of opinion is important, otherwise one can be swayed by so many differing judgments as to end by having none of his own. It must be understood that all people know the theater no matter how little thought they have given it. There is an old saying that each man knows two businesses, his own and the theater, perhaps his own not quite so well as the theater. Whatever uncertainty he has of his own affairs quickly disappears when discussing the intricacies of the theater. Here he knows what should

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be done and how. The theater has more volunteer critics than any other activity. In America, not unnaturally perhaps, this criticism is largely colored by the search for the elements that make financial success. A large part of professional criticism does not escape this lure. It is impressed and tolerant when obvious signs of survival appear. In fact, it has never been determined whether it is a critic's mission to consider a play and its performance solely on the values of the play and the merit of its performance, or to decide in his own mind whether it is a play his readers would like to see. In the former his opinion should have special value. In the latter it is worth no more than that of his neighbor. I would just as soon have the opinion of a stagehand as to the likelihood of a play's success as that of the drama's ablest observer. In fact, there is a long-established belief in the theater that stagehands are rarely wrong in forecasting the fate of a play. It always troubles me when they show no interest at rehearsal.

While the people of the theater recognize the critic's erudition they will never in their hearts believe that a person

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who spends his life on the other side of the curtain can ever really know. Too often have they seen fine performances in less showy or ungrateful parts overlooked while praise was heaped on obvious, effective parts of easy achievement. Parts and actors are like horses and jockeys. An ordinary jockey on the best horse may be the center of attention while better races are being ridden by unnoticed jockeys back in the ruck.

In a previous letter I told you of how impressed I was by Moissi in Tolstoy's *The Living Corpse*. I decided then that when I could find the right actor I would give the play a production in English. One day the actor came to me. He heard that I planned to do the play and he wanted the part. He was John Barrymore. At the time he was playing on tour in *Peter Ibbetson*. I agreed to hold the play for him. At lunch one day I told him I had a plan for him. To him it sounded inviting but rather overburdened with hope. By this time I had my own theater, the Plymouth, made possible by a generous arrangement proposed to me by the Shuberts. I told Barrymore that we would open with the Tolstoy play,

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by now rechristened *Redemption*, and that he was to stay at the Plymouth for three years, during which we would build up a repertoire. I further proposed that we would not exhaust the runs of the plays but do at least two plays each season.

It was then my plan that after three years we would tour the country with our repertoire. Barrymore was willing if it could be done. So thus began the combination of Barrymore, Jones and Hopkins which was to make theatrical history while it lasted.

Rehearsals for *Redemption* began, and at the first reading I was rather startled to find that Barrymore had acquired for the part of Fedya a rich Russian accent. I quickly dismissed rehearsal for a much-too-early lunch and asked Barrymore to join me. When we were seated he asked, "What's wrong?"

"The accent."

"What's wrong with the accent? I've been studying with a Russian all summer."

"There should be no accent."

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"Why not?"

"We're all supposed to be talking Russian. The others will speak with no accent. You'll sound like a foreigner among your own people."

He agreed, but his summer's study was never thoroughly vanquished. An occasional accent would emerge that had a distinctly Jewish sound.

After we had reached the dress-rehearsal stage I thought it would be pleasant and courteous to give a special performance with only one invited guest, the guest to be a son of Tolstoy, who was then in New York. He came, solemn and bearded, and sat through a complete performance with Barrymore acquitting himself magnificently. At the end of the performance I went to him, convinced that he would be moved and impressed by our treatment of his father's work. I saw quickly that he was neither. He looked at me with no little disapproval and said, "But where is Fedya's beard?" He had noticed nothing in the performance except that Barrymore was clean-shaven. So far as he was concerned, no beard, no play.

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The play opened, receiving laudatory but forbidding reviews. They stressed the Russian melancholy. What had looked like certain success now had disturbing aspects of failure. Business was bad, and continued so for four weeks. Had we been in any other theater we would have been forced out and our golden enterprise turned to brass. Yet there was an enthusiasm in the small audiences that came that convinced me we should hold on. They began to get the beauty of the play and the magnificence of its performance rather than the overstressed melancholy. The turn came. The business climbed to capacity. On our twenty-ninth and closing week no seats had been available for days. We were following out our policy of doing two plays a season no matter what the business.

Our second production was Sem Bonelli's *The Jest*, in which Lionel Barrymore also appeared. In Lionel I was to witness an incredible transformation. He had been playing for two seasons the part of Milt Shanks, the old, bent soldier in Augustus Thomas' play *The Copperhead*. With us he was to play Neri, the powerful, ruthless, drunken mercenary.

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When he appeared for rehearsal he was Milt Shanks, bent, gray and old, old in voice and manner. I was alarmed, for it was not until later that I was to know that this most chameleon of actors actually became the parts he played. I was to know him in four incarnations.

Lionel Barrymore is not only one of the greatest character actors of his day but the most cultured and gifted man I have known. He has a deep knowledge of the arts, music, painting, sculpture, is himself a painter and musician of ability, does etchings that compare with the masters, and has absorbed more literature than seems possible in a single lifetime. As highly gifted as John is, he never seemed other than Lionel's much younger brother, a younger brother who looked up in adoration to heights he could not attain. What I respected most in John was his appreciation of Lionel. There was no touch of envy, only complete admiration. He said to me once, "What I envy in Lionel is not his mind but his ability to believe. If he never found love he would still believe that there was such a thing." There was a suggestion of pathos in that remark.

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Lionel brought to rehearsal one day a playfellow, a great hulking figure with a murderous, battered face. He had never been on the stage, but Lionel thought I might find a part for him. There was a small part of a torturing jailer for which the newcomer at least had the appearance. Suffering with timidity that completely belied his appearance he tried for several days and then asked me if I couldn't give him something in which he wouldn't have to speak. To his intense relief I made him one of the soldiers. Later he became a star. His name was Louis Wolheim. Lionel had met him while making a picture at Ithaca. Wolheim, a man of advanced scientific training, was an instructor in higher mathematics. His appearance and his endlessly illuminating conversation remained among the irreconcilables.

Jones set *The Jest* magnificently, and I think for the first time won the recognition he had deserved from the beginning. *The Jest* was a great success. John's talents were spurred by the presence of Lionel, now a great muscular figure who carried six soldiers on his back as they struggled to bind him. Where was the Milt Shanks of a few weeks

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before? He had gone back into the manuscript of the Thomas play. Only there did he now exist.

Later with John Drew, uncle of the Barrymores, I produced a comedy by Rupert Hughes, *The Cat Bird*. Drew was a most engaging man and paid for his personality by being confined for the greater part of his life to suave and humorous characters that offered little opportunity for his great talent. There was slight difference for him in life on and off the stage. I am sure there were times when he was not quite certain whether he was behind the footlights at the Empire or a highball at the Racquet Club. His last appearance was in *Trelawney of the Wells* and there, with life almost ended, revealed what a magnificent character actor had too long been imprisoned in dress shirts.

Once in Philadelphia I was talking to him on the stage during an intermission. Suddenly the curtain went up. As I was about to make a hasty retreat he held my arm, saying, "Don't run." He played a brief scene, extended his hand and bade me an affectionate "good-by." As he walked with me to the wings, there was considerable program rustling in an

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effort to identify the new character that had dropped into the play.

He was devoted to the Barrymores. His present to them on their opening nights was a shiny apple. They remained children to him and he the unquestioned head of a royal family.

IT WAS A MORNING early in spring in London. Polly and I were walking to the theater for our last rehearsal before our widely heralded opening in Eugene O'Neill's *Anna Christie*. As we neared the theater we saw a great line of people stretching around the block. We had to pass through them to get to the stage door. We asked the doorman why those people were standing there. He said they were waiting for the doors to open that night. It seemed incredible that our play could attract such interest from people to whom it was as yet unknown. Polly, already frightened at the prospect of facing a London audience which booed plays and performances that it did not like, only needed the sight of that ominous waiting line to become

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completely unnerved. It was a sorry rehearsal. I had with me the original cast. They had played the play for nearly two seasons. With us was George Marion, one of our great character actors, who usually was a rock of certainty. On this morning he began forgetting lines, and his usual good nature was immersed in irritation. Polly trembled and wept. I felt if we rehearsed an hour we would have no play left at all so I dismissed them. We passed out again through the waiting lines, and now they looked more terrifying than ever. "I wish those people would go home now," said Polly. "And forget to come back," she added. "Why did you ever bring me here?" I told her about the American vaudeville actor who on going out to make a speech after his London debut was booed. He said, "It's all right, folks, the boat sails Wednesday." His good nature caught the audience. The boos changed to cheers, and he stayed for a long engagement. "I must remember that," said Polly, "but I don't suppose it would work a second time." Then we got to laughing, and when Polly laughs she is just as emotional as when she cries. Either way there are tears, and tears are good for Polly. They make her feel better.

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Polly was Pauline Lord, and I must trace for you the steps that led her to London that melancholy morning. After the failure of *The Deluge* I had nothing for her but I told her we would not stop until we found another opportunity. Several months later, when I was negotiating with John Barrymore for the following season, I sent for her and told her to be sure and keep herself free. I planned to have her play the lead with Barrymore, but did not tell her, as arrangements had not been concluded. Barrymore was on tour, and our plans were not finally settled for several months. I sent for Polly again. Not having heard from me she thought I had forgotten her and had signed to go on tour the following season. I advised her to cancel the other engagement. She said she would, but when she looked at her contract found that there was no cancellation clause. So the chance we had been looking for was put off for another season. Instead of playing in *Redemption*, a part that she would have done magnificently, she was touring the one-night stands of the Southwest.

The following winter there appeared in the Jewish Art Theatre a striking actor named Jacob Ben-Ami. His principal

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success was in a Scandinavian play, *Samson and Delilah*. I saw that the lead in this was an excellent part for Polly so I secured the play, had it adapted into English, and engaged Ben-Ami to play in it. We opened the following season. Ben-Ami and Polly were highly successful, and the play ran for some time. In the meantime, Polly had appeared for me in some special performances of Gorki's *Night Lodging*, which I produced in English for the first time. She played the prostitute and to my mind far surpassed the Russian actress who later appeared in the Moscow Art Theatre production.

In those days I used to meet regularly for cocktails at the Lambs' Club one of the famous older actors, James O'Neill. He had had a brilliant career touring the country for years in *Monte Cristo* and other heroic roles. He was a man of great charm, and talks with him were endlessly gratifying. He used to speak to me of his son Gene who, he thought, might have some future as a playwright. Soon Gene had some one-act plays produced by the Provincetown Players which were rightly acclaimed. In my mind these

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will always rank with O'Neill's best work. Later he had his first long play, *Beyond the Horizon*, produced uptown at a series of matinees. This, too, revealed a searching new talent. Later I met O'Neill, a shy, modest, lovable young man. He told me how his mother disliked me for so frequently making his father late for dinner. It was not the only time I had been used as an excuse by late-appearing husbands. Gene had a new play called *Anna Christie*, which he wanted me to read. As soon as I read it I telephoned Polly, saying, "I've got your play. Come down and get it." She read it and was enthusiastic. I told Gene I thought the play was a half-hour too long. He asked me to make the cuts. We went into rehearsal in the fall. After the final rehearsal, before the dress rehearsals, Polly threw herself on my lap, started to cry, and said, "That's all I can do with it." I assured her it was more than enough. Gene saw the play for the first time at the final dress rehearsal and was pleased. It was a success, and brought Gene his first substantial financial returns. A month after the opening Polly was starred in the play. The following season the play toured the East.

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Now we were in London and Polly was crying.

George Marion, playing Chris, the good-natured, slightly inebriated Swedish father of Anna, had the opening scene of the play, in which he cavorted about the barroom gaily singing, "My Yosephine, come board the ship." Marion, an old ballet master, was always touchingly amusing and graceful in the gyrations of this scene. At the opening performance he caught the English audience instantly. The backstage fright could be seen lifting and soaring away on smiles of relief and gratitude, gratitude to old George who always knew how to start things. From then on there was no doubt. At the end there was a deafening ovation, which reached its height when the frightened Polly stood alone. The actress' most extravagant dream had come true. In two years Polly had become a star in America and now she had conquered London. Hundreds of girls, women and men stood at the stage door waiting for her. It took her an hour to speak to them all. The morning papers were unrestrained and the afternoon ones even more out of control. When London likes a play there are no reservations. There are

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times when the English get fed up with being cold. Then they are very warm indeed, and it is a warmth that stays with them.

When *Anna Christie* closed, the last audience was made up for the most part of the people who had attended the first performance. The opening-night demonstration was repeated. English theatergoers not only know how to say "Hail," but also "Farewell."

It was Charles Cochrane, the English manager, who had made the London engagement possible. To him I was deeply grateful. We became friends, and later did another London production together. He is a fabulous figure in the English theater, has done more to keep it alive and experimental, and has introduced to it more great artists than all the other managements combined. He is a rare and lovable man, even more admirable in reverses than in prosperity.

There was only one shadow on the London success. It was the absence of Eugenie Blair. When I was young there was a dazzling stock actress who had her own company in Cleveland for a number of seasons. My heart was hers. I

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could not understand why she had not won wider recognition. She seemed to me greater than some of the acclaimed stars, but for some reason had not come into her own. Finally her stock-starring days were ended. Some years later I received a letter asking for a part. It was signed by my old idol, Eugenie Blair. I was just casting *Anna Christie*. I wrote at once, asking her to come to see me. There she sat, still lovely, coppery hair and beautiful face. Rather reluctantly I told her that there was only one part open—that of an old river-front drab who hung around barges. She said she would like to play it.

Modestly she sat through rehearsals, fascinated by Polly's work. I wondered what thoughts went through her mind as she watched the rich unfolding of this newcomer. If there was any feeling that there was a chance she had never been given she showed no sign of it, only admiration. In the meantime, she revealed her own rare gifts by creating a portrait of the sloppy, good-natured Marty that remained unforgettable to all who saw the play. She appeared only in the first act. When the company was playing in Chicago,

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she asked the stage manager one evening to excuse her from taking calls at the end of the play. She said she didn't feel well. Instead of going to her dressing room she sat back in a corner on the stage, apparently listening to the performance. In reply to occasional inquiries she said she felt better. At the end of the performance someone went to her. She was dead. She had made the part her own. It was not the same again. Nor was the London acclaim the same without her. We wanted her to share it.

It was during this trip to London that I met Sir James Barrie. William Gillette had given me a letter to him and he wrote asking me to tea at his Adelphi Terrace flat. I was ushered in to a tiny man standing in the center of a spacious room overlooking the river. He showed me the view, and then taking me to the street windows pointed out a flat across the way. He said, "That's where Shaw lives. Living opposite him is my only claim to distinction." After tea he talked chiefly about the war and Charles Frohman. There was a small rug in front of the fireplace. During the entire conversation he walked back and forth without once getting

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off the rug. It was like watching someone confined. Surely, I thought, he will step out of bounds once. But not once. For more than an hour it lasted. I asked him if he had abandoned playwriting. He said, "You know I never cared much about writing plays. It was really on account of Frohman I did it. I would send him a play, thinking that would be the last, and he would be so pleased that I felt I'd have to write one more for him. And it went on that way. Now that he is gone there is no longer any reason to write. I found myself once, at Frohman's request, persuading Maude Adams to close in a play of mine in which she wanted to continue in order to appear in another play of mine in which Frohman wanted to see her. He had been unable to persuade her, so he turned to me for help. I went to Atlantic City, where Miss Adams was playing, and did the best I could for him."

There was evidence of the Frohman enthusiasm that kept Barrie writing plays, which seemed to me the greatest tribute that could be paid a producer. It was by no accident that Frohman had become great in the theater. It was reward for his devotion.

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The war had left Barrie shattered. Here was spiritual shock from which there was no recovery. Many times have I seen that unearthly little man walking up and down on that small rug, up and down, up and down, like one of his fairies, imprisoned.

He came to see the play, and was enthusiastic about Polly. For a moment his theater fire was rekindled. He said he would like to write a play for her, but the flame must have died down for the play never came.

YOUR ACCOUNT of your two-days sojourn in the region we call the soul leaves me envious. The Occident has yet to learn the revelations of contemplation. Our lives are so completely externalized that we have no inner surface. We are flat figures made of profile. Occasionally a light flashes through an unknown region, but before we can explore it is gone. If you are finding the way to sustain this light you are on your way to experiences that most of us will never know. You will, in those moments, truly live. To me the most unforgettable thought in Ibsen is that when we dead awake we find that we have never lived. That for this two days you were free of pain with all its causes still throbbing inside you is beyond scientific explanation.

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But then your whole experience is beyond explanation, the beauty you saw, the music you heard, standing strong and vigorous, looking down upon your prostrate body. Now you know that you have two bodies, and may live in the one you choose.

As to my letters, it must be evident to you by now that what started out to be diversion for you has become indulgence for myself. I find rare pleasure in mingling with old friends again, and it is so pleasant to air theories and opinions with no chance of interruption. I agree with myself so completely that I find myself an appreciative listener, and we know how rarely those are to be found. Maybe that's why people talk to themselves. There are no arguments, and there is a keen understanding of thoughts even when not too well expressed. A man can say to himself, "You know what I mean," and receive from himself a reassuring nod. He is not rudely checked by himself with such challenges as, "For instance?" or, "But I thought you said." Who wants to be annoyed by what he may have said? It is what is being said that is important. It may seem wholly unimportant

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tomorrow, but at the moment it throbs with truth and delights one with his own wisdom. It makes him more tolerant to a world that lacks his understanding. It gives his eyes a glint of kindness. He associates himself with those understanding ones who smile down the ages. He knows he would have been fit company for them. He elects himself to their circle. He even chooses the one with whom he would have been happiest. He does not want to be too profound. Voltaire or Heine would do, Cervantes or Swift. Perhaps in a humanistic moment he would choose Rousseau or Henry George. Or he might find easy intercourse with Mark Twain or Herman Melville. He is highly adaptable in these moods of self-communion, and, best of all, there is no one to refuse him association with whom he chooses. In the club of his choice there are no black balls. He is proposer and seconder, and is unanimously elected by one rousing vote. He has found an escape from life that is not injurious. At some time his overestimation may overtake him, but too late to rob him of the pleasure it gave him. He can sigh happily and say, "It was grand while it lasted." Of course

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there is always the remote danger that the keepers will come and get him, but even they will be too late to spoil his excursion. He had already had it, as I am having it now in my letters to you.

The Jest closed in June to reopen in September, but on account of an unexpected upheaval in the theater the reopening was delayed several weeks. It was the actors' strike, which for a time had Broadway in hysterical turmoil. Friends shook fists in each other's faces. Actors threatened to organize their own companies and never work for managers again. Managers swore they would never produce again. Leading actors solemnly picketed theaters with placards. There were street harangues. Actors with real and fancied grievances found release for long pent-up spleen. Many actors found a new way to make public appearances, and played with a zest they had been lacking on the stage. It was a complete Broadway catharsis. Grievances old and new were brought to light.

In the theater, as in all other industries, there were fair and unfair managements. The fair managements made the

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usual mistake of paying little attention to the infection of the whole theater that was setting in as a result of the indefensible practices of unfair managements. The actors, some years previously, had formed a small society called the Actors' Equity Association. Slowly it gathered strength, and with the mounting managerial abuses its membership grew. Like all labor organizations it was made possible by the short-sighted acts of the employers. Unions can be founded only on grievances. Organizers cannot excite people who consider themselves and their fellows well treated and respected. Excitement is an essential ingredient to the organization of protest. Once a labor organization finds power it may be guilty of oppression, but whatever the oppression it was only made possible by original employer abuses. In this strike I learned that it is not only abuse that arouses employees, but the sense that they are regarded as unimportant, unnecessary to the general scheme. That is a feeling that does not set well on anyone whose ego has not been completely destroyed. An actor's last possession is his ego. Any attack upon that must finally result in bitter retaliation.

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Even when the strike might have been settled the actor did not want it settled, not until he had decanted himself of accumulated resentments; not until his bruised ego was whole again. This strike was a study in miniature of the whole employer-employee problem, and left me, at least, convinced that it is not terms and conditions that count so much as relationship. It is bad for any man to feel that he is not a person but an easily replaced unit in a scheme in which he has no say. In some way, at some time, he will assert himself and insist upon his say. He can do this only by organization. The attitude, less common now, of employers refusing to meet with their men and listen courteously to their grievances showed complete ignorance of the way to peace. The very meeting and willing discussion at once remove the chief grievance.

When unexpected demands from the actors came, the first reaction of the managers was the historic one of complete defiance and unwillingness to consider. This, of course, became a solidifying agent in the actors' ranks. After some days the more liberal managers, who naturally were the

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managers against whom the actors had no grievance, succeeded in the adoption of a more conciliatory attitude. A committee was authorized to study carefully the actors' demands. As it happened, this committee was composed of managers on whom the demands worked little hardship, since the conditions proposed were such as they had largely complied with in the past. Among the members of the committee were Henry Miller, Winthrop Ames, Henry W. Savage, Sam H. Harris, Alf Hayman and myself. We prepared a liberal contract which we had reason to believe would be acceptable to the council of the Actors' Equity Association, of which Francis Wilson was president. With some difficulty we succeeded in getting approval of the contract from the more reactionary group of managers.

Instead of submitting our contract to the Equity Council we foolishly decided that the whole affair should end in a love feast, so we gave a luncheon for the Equity officers and council at the Claridge Hotel. Now one of the most difficult and temperamental of our members was David Belasco, who had always treated actors with the greatest consideration.

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He looked upon them as his children, and his paternalism was kindly. But having a Bourbon strain he saw a great difference in voluntary action and action that was forced upon him. Added to this he had a burning aversion for Francis Wilson, with whom he had once been associated. When he spoke Wilson's name it came out as two long hisses, "Fransssess Wilsssson."

The luncheon went off very well. It then came time for speeches. I am probably unjust to Wilson, but it seemed to me that there was more hatred for managers in his activities than there was love for actors, and as he was to open the discussion I hoped that he would be conciliatory as I realized we had some smouldering brands on our side of the table, and one particular brand that would like to flare up at Wilson. Wilson ended all suspense by promptly breaking up the love feast. He opened his speech with:

"This is a new day for the actor. After standing for years, with hat in hand, outside the manager's office, he is invited——"

That was as far as he got. With a roar Belasco arose,

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smashed his hand down on the table, breaking a glass and cutting himself severely. He could only hiss the name of Wilson. What was said after that no one knew. Pandemonium broke out. The meeting broke up. The contract was never reached. Two angry old gentlemen, nursing an antique grudge, had ruined our plans. The reactionaries on both sides took advantage of the break to retire to their original, uncompromising positions, and the fight was on. The managers, completely ignorant of labor tactics, proceeded to make the mistakes that insure defeat. We brought suit against the Equity Association and as many members as we could think of under the Danbury Hatters' decision. We fostered an opposition actors' organization composed of a number of prominent actors who were not in sympathy with Equity. These were at once branded as traitors joining with the managers to break up the Equity organization, this in spite of the fact that its membership included some of the most honorable names in the profession. We offered a liberal contract, covering all grievances, to the new organization, the Actors' Fidelity League, the members of which

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were at once branded "Fidos." Our attempt, of course, was to break up the Equity Association. The natural retaliation on Equity's part was to join the American Federation of Labor. They had threatened to do this, but we did not believe them, for we had been assured that the Federation would not take them in. At the last moment, when the move seemed imminent, there was still a chance to prevent it, but following a conference to this end there were charges of bad faith on both sides, and Equity was welcomed into the Federation as a favorite child.

The fight became bitter, and obviously had to run its needless course. The stagehands' union sought to act as intermediary. We refused to meet with them. By that action they were forced to strike in sympathy. They walked out. The theaters were closed. Although we did not yet realize it, the strike was won. Soon came word of disaffections in our group. Members were secretly negotiating with Equity. For the protection of all it was urgent to make peace. A conference was arranged at the St Regis Hotel. I was pre-

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siding that day, and appointed the managers' committee. Purposely I appointed no firebrands. As soon as I announced the committee Mr Belasco seized his hat and left the meeting. I knew that he was offended because he had not been named. I asked Edgar MacGregor to go to him and explain that I purposely did not name him as I felt the experience might be humiliating to him, but if he wanted to come with us to meet me at the office at eight o'clock. To my surprise, he came. I assured him how much I regretted the offense he had taken, and again explained the reason. I said to him, "The important thing is that we show no anger. It has to be settled, so we may as well be friendly about it. If Francis Wilson is there, give him a little kiss."

We went into the conference room. Wilson was there, and to my amazement Belasco went to him, took his hand and kissed it. Wilson was so stunned that he lost his belligerency. Belasco sat in a corner, looking like the dove of peace, said nothing, only smiled his benign approval on the amicable words that were said.

Our only difficulty was in saving the members of the

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Actors' Fidelity League. In labor, members of a counter union, organized during strike, are subject to drastic exclusion if the strike succeeds. There was to be no exception here. We took the position that the Fidelity members were not only important people in the theater but were our friends who had tried to help us in time of stress. We could not be asked to desert them. Our position was finally accepted. The strike was over.

David Belasco was the most colorful producer of his time. His whole life was the theater. He lived in it day and night. He was a great director, and the first producer to work out his productions to the last detail. He never thought of cost. His dream was perfection. He was so imbued with the theater that his daily life was an expression of histrionism. He invariably played a part. Only in moments of great anger was the real Belasco seen, and even in these moments he managed to think of the right emphasis, the effective gesture. His opening-night curtain speeches were acting gems. He managed to convey a great weariness, as though the last ounce of him had gone into the just-revealed effort. Even

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to his last days weariness was something he never knew. He exhausted everyone around him.

Had he possessed an appreciation of writing he would have surpassed all producers, but he did not have Winthrop Ames's recognition of the literate and authentic in writing. To him plays were devices that provided acting and producing opportunities. He did not look upon the dramatist as a primary contributor, but as one who supplied a framework which he would fill in. He made ordinary plays seem important. He devoted his gifts to material that was rarely worthy of them. He never understood the praise received by plays which to him were without glamor. To him the theater was a world of glamor. There was ample room for life on the outside. He could not have been entirely wrong. The theater admits of different viewpoints. It is for each to express his own. Belasco stated his magnificently.

With the end of the strike *The Jest* resumed and ran through January, even though Lionel had been obliged to leave because of a previous contract. In the meantime, for some months we had been preparing a production of

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Richard III. Bobby Jones had spent the summer in London, studying the Tower, which he was to use as a permanent setting, picking up rare fabrics for costumes, and collecting armor.

John, in the meantime, whose voice was furry and not best suited to Shakespeare, had been studying diligently with Mrs Margaret Carrington, who by some magic, entirely her own, had turned his faulty instrument into a medium of ease and beauty. Jones's sketches were magnificent. It now remained for me to do my part. I studied the play, made cuts, mulled over the variorum, and accumulated literature on the play and its various performances. None of this suited me. It seemed to me that the traditional treatment and interpretation of the play was a mass of personal imposition which in the desire to impress itself had left the author out of account. I felt I had found the reason for Shakespeare's apparent remoteness. His text was not dated, but its recognized treatment was that conceived by actors long dead. It was fair to assume that Shakespeare was more alive than his crumbled interpreters, so I dismissed author-

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ity, went back to the play itself, and decided to treat it as any other newly written work. It was not difficult to know how Shakespeare wanted his works played. He had explained it eloquently and simply in Hamlet's advice to the players. If Shakespearean actors and producers will accept those wise words as their guide they need not trouble about the rightness of interpretation, yet all Shakespearean performances seemed to me in direct violation of the author's exhortation. I have even heard Hamlets read the speech to the players in direct violation of its content.

Having determined to treat the work as a new play I refused to have any books of the play on the stage. The actors were given typewritten parts with no written directions. They had only the words they were to say. I then asked them to treat the play with no reverence, explaining that reverence is invariably funereal. I told them it was a melodrama and must be treated as such, not cold verse to be intoned by dead tongues. I warned them against listening to the words and embracing them.

The cast was not difficult to convert, as I had carefully

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chosen actors with no Shakespearean experience. I was careful to have no accents, English, Southern, Western, New England, or New York. I wanted an unnoticeable homogeneity of speech. Traditional stage business and expansive gesture were discarded. The whole effort was to become immersed in the rich flow of the play. In all of this John was of inestimable help. He was completely in sympathy with what I was seeking, and set a clear example to the others.

It was in *Richard* that John took his place in the classical gallery. He was unforgettable. He had fire, beauty, humor, cajolery, chilling cruelty. Shakespeare tragedy, for the first time in our day, became vibrantly alive. Here again it had the wide popular response that it must once have had to have survived. This was no play requiring special knowledge for appreciation. Here was no work to be shunned because of its tragic content. Here was exaltation, a brief, dazzling sojourn in the high heavens of emotion. Here was an experience for all people, an experience that made them one.

The theater was stormed by clamoring people seeking

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this flight. The high emotions had surged into all the by-ways, sweeping back with them eager people who sought the source.

We were now finishing the second year at the Plymouth. It was now apparent that our plans would keep us there much longer than we had so optimistically calculated. Productions of *Hamlet*, *Cyrano*, *Faust*, *Peer Gynt* and *Richard II* were to follow. Then came a sudden end to our dreams. John was stricken with a severe nervous and physical breakdown. It was to keep him out of the theater for eighteen months. *Richard III* was abruptly closed when it had scarcely begun. No more was John to draw this seering portrait. No more were Jones's brooding, haunting pictures to be looked upon. Once more the three of us came together for a production of *Hamlet*, of which I shall tell you later, but it is *Richard* that always will remain with me. For the only time in my experience all forces fused into a perfect whole. For once I glimpsed the greatness of Shakespeare.

SPEAK THE SPEECH, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest and—as I may say—whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O! it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise; I would have such a fellow shipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod; pray you, avoid it.

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Be not too tame, neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor; suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show Virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskillful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theater of others. O! there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journey-men had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will them-

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selves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh, too, though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered; that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.

Not only is this the complete guide to the acting and direction of Shakespeare's plays, but to all plays. Furthermore, it reveals that the faults of each were the same in Shakespeare's time as ours, have probably been the same always, for unless a person is both an artist and honest the worst of him is apt to come to the surface when he makes public appearance. The eye of the audience throws a great light, and in this light defects are outlined in high relief. If an actor or director would save himself from cruel exposure he would be ever mindful of Hamlet's wise words.

The speech also reveals that Shakespeare did not escape the writhings of a dramatist who sees his work mutilated. That should give some comfort to his little brothers of today who feel that they are suffering special torture. Likewise Shakespeare was not deceived by the approval of the

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"unskillful" or "barren" spectators. Undoubtedly he had been told by actors whom he criticized that the audience seemed to approve them. A bad actor's best ally is the stupid section of an audience. Guffaws of approval from ten empty-pates outweigh in this actor's mind the silent disapproval of hundreds, "though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered; that's villainous and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it." The theater is a breeding ground for "pitiful ambition." Only by honesty and unselfishness can it be disinfected.

Stage direction frequently brings out the worst in those who practise it. The director occupies a czarlike position. From his word there is no appeal. If he is a victim of megalomania he finds unrestricted opportunity to feed his delusion. If he has sadistic impulses, here is a way of release. There are directors who in each company fasten on one victim, invariably a minor actor who will not retaliate, and for the duration of the rehearsals this helpless one is a writhing conduit for the director's spleen. There are hysterical direc-

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tors who scream like angry harlots and work themselves into a state not pretty to look upon. There is one director who at one point in the rehearsals, when he can bear no more, kicks out the footlights. There are directors who writhe and weep when they realize that all is hopeless. Much of the latent ugliness of disturbed human nature is revealed in the presence of defenseless actors. Of course the labor pains of directors occasionally take on an amusing aspect. Henry Miller sometimes pressed God into the cast. At the end of an unsatisfactory dress rehearsal he fell upon his knees before the assembled company, raised his hands to heaven, and in pain cried out, "You are my witness, God. You see that I have done all with those people that I could. I can do no more. I leave them in your hands. I feel sorry for you, God."

Now the answer to all this is plain. If an actor is bad in a part it is the director's fault. He should not have been permitted to keep the part. If a director does not know before rehearsals begin that there will be days in the moulding process when the play and performance look bad, experience

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has been of little use to him. The director is in command of the ship. If he cannot keep his head when rough going is encountered he is a poor captain. There are directors who cannot make clear their meaning. The more they try to explain, the more confusing they become. Frequently they find themselves suspended from a simile that has no apparent application. The director is a teacher. A good teacher not only knows his subject, but has the gift of making it interesting to others. This he cannot hope to do if his own mind is confused by anger or impotence or inordinate vanity.

One of the earliest repertoire theaters in America was established by the Mormons. It was their custom to begin each day's rehearsal with prayer. To the extent that prayer induces humility in the theater it is valuable. The Mormon custom might well be revived.

There used to be a theatrical magnate named Abraham Lincoln Erlanger. Early in life he forsook his gentle namesake and took up with Napoleon. He was a squat man with heavy torso, tiny legs and arms, a large head with eyes whose pupils had a distended belladonna-laden look. For a

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toupee he wore an unparted Napoleonic thatch. He had a positive voice and a disturbing habit of emphasizing his utterings by beating the listener's breast with the back of a pudgy hand. "You see [bang] it was like this [bang]. I told them years ago what would happen [bang]. Everybody thought I was wrong [bang]. But now look [bang]."

With little knowledge of the stage he fancied himself a stage director. Because of his financial interests in plays produced by competent managers he insisted upon taking charge at dress-rehearsal time when most of the work had been done. The casts understood that they would have to be patient for a day or two while the little magnate, attired in sweater and cap, told them how to read their lines, the chief requirement being that they must be loud. He would fasten on an emphasis in a line like "I'm not going." He would insist that *not* was the word. The actor, seeming to be tone deaf, would emphasize "I'm" or "going." The little giant would keep the actor going over and over the line until *not* came out with a boom. Then Erlanger, pleased with his accomplishment, would say, "You see, my boy,

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it only takes patience. Now the line means something. I don't know why you weren't corrected long ago." There is a story of his holding up a Ziegfeld Follies rehearsal to teach Bert Williams how to sing a coon song, with Williams listening to him blandly and saying, "Yassa, boss, yassa, I see what you mean, yassa, boss. I never would have thought of it."

Cohan and Harris were producing a minstrel show in which Erlanger was a partner. He felt the call of duty and appeared at the final rehearsal. There was a song-and-dance team, Alexander and Scott, who had been a great success in vaudeville. One was a female impersonator, and they did a dressy, high-yellow act. Erlanger stopped their familiar routine, gave them a long explanation of what they were supposed to be doing and how they were missing. They listened attentively. When the master had finished Alexander turned to Scott and said, "You see."

There was an old building called Bryant Hall where in the busier days of the theater many companies rehearsed. Sam Harris and Erlanger were standing at the Astor bar

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early one morning, after a festive evening. Erlanger finally said, "Well, what 'll we do now, Sam?" Sam considered the possibilities and said, "Let's go over to Bryant Hall. Maybe we'll find a rehearsal."

When Jim Corbett retired from the prize ring he became an actor. Finally he had his own company and was trying to book a tour which in those days was not easy for an outsider. He called on Erlanger. With all his physical handicaps, Erlanger fancied himself a boxer. He went to Jack Cooper's gymnasium regularly and put on the gloves with Cooper who never made it hard for him. "You know, Jim," he said, "I'd like to go a few rounds with you." Corbett concealed his surprise, and an engagement was made. Erlanger appeared in fighting togs with his toy arms weighted down with boxing gloves. Corbett sparred and tapped lightly, giving Erlanger easy access to any part of him. Finally Erlanger slapped Corbett's chin. Corbett stopped, clapped his glove to his face, and in apparent pain said, "jeez, boss, take it easy." Boss slapped him again, and Corbett became more distressed. After three rounds, in

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which Corbett had not scored a hit, Erlanger jubilantly removed the gloves, Corbett still rubbing bruised places. The next day Corbett was given his bookings.

I must tell you the story of Mike and Mabel. Mike was a baseball star and Mabel a musical-comedy star. Mike was a handsome, congenial man with a flashing smile. For years he was an idol of the fans. Mabel was a slight, dark little person with an unusual comic gift very much like that of an English comedienne who came along some years later, Beatrice Lillie. Following a highly successful baseball season Mike was booked in vaudeville. It was arranged that he and Mabel would do an act together. Mabel took Mike in hand, taught him some dances and patter for which he showed genuine aptitude. The act was a great success. Mike and Mabel married, and continued playing after Mike's baseball career had ended. They were exceedingly happy except on those frequent occasions when Mike in his conviviality forgot to go home. Mabel was a fiery little person, and it took all of Mike's bantering to pacify her.

One unfortunate day Mabel died. Her gay little earthly

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garment was cremated. The urn with Mabel's ashes was given to the dazed Mike, and grief-stricken he wandered the town with Mabel under his arm. He went to all the familiar haunts, acquiring new consolation in each. He finally reached Murray's restaurant, sat in a corner with Mabel on the table. The place was festive. Jazz blared out for the dancers, but Mike sat disconsolate, alone. Finally Mike left, forgetting to take Mabel with him. He continued his wanderings until exhausted. He awoke, heavy-headed, the next day, and had a feeling that he had mislaid something. Suddenly the dreadful realization came to him. He tried to think where he had been, but was hazy. He dressed and started the search. After fruitless hours he stopped in at Murray's. The manager asked him if he had left something there the night before. Mike's heart leaped. The manager brought him the urn. Mike took it tenderly and said, "It's Mabel. I thought I'd lost her."

For some reason Murray's brings to mind an experience I had with a saloonkeeper when I had been in New York but a short time. His name was Charley. His saloon was

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frequented by questionable people and he was supposed to have underworld connections. I was introduced to him by a vaudeville agent, and with considerable superiority regarded him as someone best forgotten.

I was living at a hotel at the time. About two o'clock one morning my telephone rang. An estimable and charming woman of good family was under arrest in the Forty-Seventh Street police station. She asked that I come. I dressed, rather bewildered, and went to the station. She had been at a supper party at a Broadway hotel. She was unused to drink, and feeling its effects coming on had slipped away from the party in a desire to get home. When she reached the street she lost her bearings and began to make inquiries of a stranger. She was arrested for soliciting. The charge was serious and the bail was five hundred dollars. Worst of all was her dread that her family might learn of her predicament, so no help was to be looked for there. I tried to make the desk officer see that a dreadful mistake had been made, but he was skeptical and doubtless without authority. I had no property to offer as bail and not nearly enough money.

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Suddenly the despised Charley came to mind. I went to his saloon, explained the predicament, and with no further ado he took five hundred dollars from the safe, went with me to the police station, and posted the bail. I took the distressed one home, telling her that she would have to be in court at nine o'clock the following morning. Charley met me before court. He had seen the officer who made the arrest and had persuaded him to change the charge from soliciting to intoxication. Soliciting at that time meant from three to six months at Blackwells Island and conviction was rarely escaped. The woman, now thoroughly distracted, appeared. Charley advised her to plead guilty to the intoxication charge. She did, and was fined ten dollars. In an hour she was home, and the nightmare was over. Charley's kindness had saved her and no one ever knew. So whatever Charley may have been or whatever became of him I shall always have a tender spot for him. When a good deed was to be done, he asked no questions.

There comes to mind a London taxi driver whom I saw but a moment but who has remained with me ever since. I

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arrived in London from Paris the night before the Duke of York's wedding. Rain was slashing, and it was bitter cold—the English cold that introduces us to our marrow. As we drove to the hotel we passed great crowds of people lined on the sidewalks, a shivering mass. I asked the driver why they were standing there. He said they were waiting for the wedding procession, which was to pass the following noon.

“But these poor people will die,” I protested.

“I don't think so, sir, they've too much 'eart for that.”

So from a taxi driver I learned the secret of England's dominance. We think of it as stolidity and muddling through. He knew that it was stout heart.

Once in Normandy I saw some scenes that I wanted to photograph. Having no camera, I sought out the village photographer. His studio was in his house. He was having lunch. I waited for him to finish. I then explained what I wanted, and he said he would take care of it. I asked him if he could come with me then. The suggestion was too incredible to be considered. I asked him if he hadn't time. He said he had, but that was not the point. He worked only

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by engagement and it was not his custom to upset his day merely for business. He would make an appointment for the third day. I said I could not wait that long. I offered him an absurd sum for an hour's work. He was not interested. He made it a practice to arrange his own time. What kind of life would he have if he went running every time a bit of business offered? It was not to be considered. I stopped urging and left the little man, realizing that here at least was one person who held ordered living more important than business. I wondered what he would think of America.

YOU ASK ME what are the functions of a theatrical producer. The term "producer" has become as vague as that of "lady." There are landladies, salesladies, ladies of leisure, ladies of the night, and here and there ladies. I would say that the ratio of men calling themselves producers who are in no true sense producers would be about the same as the ratio of lady appellations to ladies. The magic word "presents" is the wand which converts anyone into a producer. He may have presented nothing to the process. He may have been off fishing when the enterprise was carried through but still he "presents." The program says so, and it must be so. I should say that as a general classification producers come under two heads, first, the producer who selects his play,

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works with the author on revision, with the scene designer on the production, casts, directs and supervises the entire process from beginning to end; second, the producer who selects a play and after that delegates the realizing to others. In between there are variations. The producer of the second type may place his faith entirely in names, known author, known designer, known director, known and, if possible, very well-known actors. He is a dealer in talents already established. He brings no new blood into the theater. He is a forester who does no replanting. It would seem to me that the final test of producers or producing groups is the amount of new talent they have brought into the theater. It was the joy of old producers like Belasco and Tyler to develop new talent. That was the high adventure of the theater. To the extent that I have succeeded in doing this I can assure you that therein lies the chief joy of producing. Perhaps there is an analogy in the horse lover who breeds his own winners as against the owner who buys them. There is an element of affection in the first process that is not to be found in the second—a kind of fatherhood. Of course there are producers

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who have no gift for discerning undisclosed talent. There are other producers who may have the gift but not the courage to trust it. Producing is ephemeral work. Its most successful result is one day nearer oblivion on the night of its initial triumph. Obviously the only achievement that can survive this oblivion is the development of some new talent that can carry on. By new talent I do not mean necessarily talent hitherto unknown. It might well be talent only partially realized, such as was revealed in the first serious effort of David Warfield or John Barrymore or Helen Hayes or Henry Hull.

And of course there is special joy in bringing out the work of new dramatists or the work of known dramatists that reveals a new advance. It is probably evident to you by now that I am in complete sympathy with actors and their aspirations, but my first interest is always in the dramatist. I am not one who, like Stanislavsky or Belasco, believes that the theater belongs to the actor. To me the dramatist always has been the motivating and surviving force. His impact and survival are made possible by the actor and the audience,

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but before either contributed there was his voice. As against that it may be said that competent actors and producers have made unimportant plays survive, but service to a poor dramatist is not necessarily service to the theater.

It is the theater and not the survival of mediocrity that we must keep in mind. The initial voice in the theater is that of the dramatist. The rest can only be echo, eloquent, beautiful, informed echo if you like, but still echo. It is the actor's art to be pure echo, to absorb the dramatist's meaning, take it out of the manuscript valley and make it resound against the surrounding hills, but if the resultant notes are to be stirring the dramatist must first have intoned them. He cannot look to the actor to provide the high hills. He cannot leave the actor in the lowlands of sparse expression. It may be, and has been, that the actor will find force and beauty of which the dramatist did not dream, yet the force and beauty were there whether the dramatist realized it or not.

Not infrequently do writers write better than they know. The pen is not necessarily confined to the understanding

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of him who uses it. Vagrant pens have often wandered and brought to paper something that the author had not invited. When a man starts to write he is not the only host. There are other beckoning forces that bring unexpected guests to his table. Automatic writing is not confined to those who trancelike submit to it. Every writer knows that. If it were not for the surprises which writers frequently find on the paper before them much of the joy of writing would be lost. So with the dramatist. Characters whom he catalogued of small importance suddenly have an assertion of their own and take on proportions beyond their original confines. Situations for which he had not planned unexpectedly loom and demand their realization. This reveals that there are around us many thoughts seeking expression, and he who is most sensitive and pliable is called poet and philosopher.

He who writes only what he conceived is called hack. It is the dramatist in touch with these forces who brings life to the theater, for he has tapped a reservoir that has been seeking many outlets. Auditors who have been vaguely assailed by those same forces recognize their validity. They

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think to themselves, "I could have said that." The truth is that the thought has previously knocked at their door but they did not or could not give it expression. In that sense there is truly nothing new in the world. All thoughts have always been here seeking expression. The revelations of centuries hence are here now and always have been. They must remain unrevealed until men open the way for them. God is patient and does not withdraw what cannot be grasped. In good time it will be.

Does this seem like taking a long journey to bring the importance of the dramatist to your door? It may be, but it makes my point that he is primarily the one of the theater through whom hidden forces seek expression. He is the one who may have contact, however frail, with eternity. If his contact be strong he is called Shakespeare or Goethe, if weak, any of the countless thousands of hastily acclaimed names that have come and gone. But even forgotten ones have found at times their truth, which in some less perceptible way has released imprisoned clamoring.

And now I should like to return to actors to speak of one

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who in a strange way had contact with unusual forces, who, too, was an uncalculating medium.

When Lionel Barrymore was obliged to leave *The Jest* he and I agreed that we would do *Macbeth* as soon as he was free. Bobby Jones felt the play should be given a spacious, abstract treatment. When we saw his sketches we were enthusiastic. They permitted an expanse of ominous, witch-infested space. Figures came out of the dark into the light and were enveloped by the dark again. There was the quality of an evil dream in which visible objects had a nightmarish distortion. There was no sense of reality. The whole was pervaded by the poisonous brew of the witch's cauldron. Russell Bennett provided a musical score which accelerated this descent into the dark places of man's nether mind. Lionel, as I have told you, becomes the character he assumes. He is not the detached interpreter. He is possessed by the character, hypnotized. He gives one the feeling of a somnambulist, walking with open eyes, talking and gesturing, but seeming to be directed by an unseen force. *Macbeth's* tenancy of Lionel produced an almost unbearable

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effect of horror. His eyes became those of a stricken madman, his voice a cry of writhing pain. As surely as Macbeth was possessed by the witches Lionel was possessed by Macbeth. The result was something that had little relation to acting. It lay in another dimension of which we know little.

Its effect was a puzzled and displeased audience, an audience which suffered new and forbidden emotions not to be classified with past theater experience. The easiest escape from this discomfort was quick rejection, and in many cases angry rejection, yet there were a hardy few not easily confused by new and strange experience who knew that not only were they looking into the deep and infested well of Macbeth's soul, but were seeing a supreme portrayal that was far outside the realm of acting. This was the achievement that many of Lionel's admirers had been looking for, but when it came they were unequal to it. He had flown too far. It was an unfortunate experience, for Lionel was a man with no appraisal of his own gifts and one too easily convinced of their frailty. His enthusiasm for the theater, which up to that time had been high, noticeably dwindled. His un-

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fortunate reception in *Macbeth* made him easy prey for Hollywood, to which, not much later, he succumbed.

I tried to blot out his disappointment by immediately having him do another play, *The Claw*, by Henri Bernstein. He gave another unforgettable performance, and the play was highly successful, but his enthusiasm was not rekindled. He went to Hollywood, and there for too many years the stage's most strangely gifted son has been interned. It was not money that attracted Lionel. He cared nothing about it. He had lived happily for years without it. He was given to no extravagances, always lived a quiet and retired life, never knew what the glitter of Broadway meant. We never had a contract, and he never asked what he was to receive. After the successful opening of *The Claw* in Boston I told him what his share was to be. He objected because he thought it was too much. No, it was not money that drew him to Hollywood and certainly not love of the work. He wanted to get away from the theater, and Hollywood was the simplest escape.

Then began a series of productions with Ethel Barrymore,

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to my mind the most glamorous actress of her day. Success on the stage came to her early in life. She had first intended to be a concert pianist, but blood of the Drews and Barrymores wisely willed otherwise, and for several decades she enchanted audiences throughout the country. She assumed, when but a girl, a maternal attitude to her then restless and unplaced brothers who, at the height of their later success, never seemed to grow up to her. Her approval of their work meant more to them than that of anyone else. She had an unfailing theater sense which they recognized and trusted. The best performance of *Hamlet* given by John was one at which she was the only attendant. It was before the scenery and costumes had been brought in. Ethel sat in the balcony. Her pride in his achievement could only be expressed in tears. Here was what she had dreamed of in the boy who in early life had given her great concern. His later defection from the theater was, I am sure, the disappointment of her life. He was the bearer of many hopes that she had nurtured for years. She admired Lionel and adored him, but found consolation in his reverses in the conviction she had ac-

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quired somewhere in early life that Lionel was the unlucky one of the family.

Our first production was Hauptmann's *Rose Bernd*, in which Ethel revealed hitherto unknown gifts as the tortured peasant girl. This we followed with a production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Owing to my own failure to see that she was not well and was too exhausted to play and rehearse at the same time, she did not do herself justice as Juliet, although, as in anything she did, she had moments of unequaled beauty. This was followed with productions of *The Laughing Lady*, *The Second Mrs Tanqueray* and Zoe Akins' *The Royal Fandango*. Ill-health pursued Ethel for most of the time. In all her years in the theater she had never taken a rest. Between plays she made pictures or appeared in vaudeville. The needs and concerns of others and a complete inability to manage her personal affairs kept her working when she had no right to be. Finally she was overcome by an exhaustion that she could not fight off. At times it made her irritable. There were occasional outbursts of anger which the more sensational newspapers gaily seized upon. But

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there is a great public that has not forgotten its indebtedness to her. In her own dazzling way she still stands alone. There is no successor.

In the meantime, John had returned from England and was ready to do *Hamlet*. Bobby Jones designed a simple and impressive set of Elsinore. Again Mrs Carrington worked with John, and as always he was unsparing in preparation. Of all the actors I have known he was the most conscientious and untiring in preparation. Nothing was too much trouble. He would go to the costumer, the bootmaker, the wigmaker, the armor maker, twenty times each, forty if necessary to get everything right. He was the first to know his part. He would rehearse each time as though it were a performance. He was never late, never made excuses. He would rehearse scenes with other actors as long as they wanted. He never grew tired. To him perfection was the aim, and its attainment could not be too much trouble. He loved creating a part, and once that excitement had passed the part interested him no more. He was not the actor who wanted to recline on a long run. Many unkind things have been said of his desertion of

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the theater, everything from unreliability to dissipation. None of them were true. He was that rarest of phenomena, the actor who hated to act. He loved to create, but once that had been accomplished, he was like an artist who could not bear to look again upon a finished painting, or a writer who was nauseated by a glimpse of some past creation. This is a feeling that artists will readily understand. It is something akin to those forms in the animal world who must be restrained from devouring their young. That he would have had an unparalleled career there was no doubt, and he knew it. He did not forsake undreamed-of realms. His renunciation was with full knowledge of what he was leaving. He did not want the slavery that continuous service in the theater demands. He did not want to feel that on the fourteenth of the following November, at eight forty-one, he had to be made up and ready to go on at the Cass Theatre, Detroit. He was in no sense what the theater knows as a troupier, what his forbears had been, what his uncle John and sister Ethel were. The creative part of the theater he loved. Its repetition was unbearable.

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Hamlet was a success. As always, his first performance was his best. Some of his later were embarrassingly bombastic. He did not have the gift of knowing when he was right. He was always a conscious actor. He lacked Lionel's submersion and Ethel's theater sense. Once he had successfully created a part he was given to embroidering, and his embroidering was not good. He thought of unaccountable squeaks and grimaces, and was not averse to an occasional unexpected leap. It was as though once he had made the mould he proceeded to break it. Occasionally, due to some relaxation, his first good performance would come back. In a hundred-and-one performances he played many different Hamlets. There were great disagreements as to whether he was good or bad. None of these could be settled, because the disputants were talking about different performances.

At the time the Moscow Art Theatre Company was playing in New York, I invited the members to a matinee of *Hamlet*. John was particularly anxious to impress them with the result that he played with a hysteria and extravagance that was even exhausting to the spectator. I went back to him

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after the first scene and begged him to alight. He had no idea that he had been flying. Ethel was there, and horrified. Well, the stampede was on, and he never got back into the corral all afternoon.

The dazed and gentle Russians came backstage after the performance. There they stood, an inarticulate group, Stanislawsky, Katchaloff, Moscovin, Mme Chekova and the rest. John glowed in their ominously silent presence. Finally Mme Chekova, in an attempt to break the embarrassing interlude, said, "Do you really do this eight times a week?" Fortunately cameramen then appeared to take group photographs, and the explosion of flashlights filled in the conversational gaps. It was too bad that the Russians could not have seen him at his best. They, above all, would have appreciated it.

So there, my boy, is a portrait of a brilliant creator, an erratic repeater, and, rarest of all, an actor who hated to act.

When we were playing *Hamlet* in Washington President and Mrs Coolidge attended a performance. John and I were

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invited to visit the President the following noon, an unearthly hour for John. Knowing the President's reputation for taciturnity we decided that the call could not last long, as we had nothing we wanted to talk about.

Either the President had been misrepresented or this was one of his rare loquacious moods, for he kept us for a half-hour and did all of the talking. He told us with considerable pride of his participation in theatricals at Amherst, and it was quite evident that this unexpected, unemotional man felt in his heart that had he chosen he could have been an actor. That is a conviction frequently encountered among businessmen and their wives, but one would scarcely have believed that such thoughts were harbored by this granite product of a Vermont farm.

Ethel tells a story of having a Sunday luncheon with the Coolidges. The President, that morning, had attended church alone. In an effort to start the conversational flow Mrs Coolidge asked:

"Was the sermon good?"

"Fairly."

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"What did he preach about?"

"Sin."

"What did he say about it?"

"He was against it."

So, after all, maybe the grim one could have been a comedian.

IN AN EARLIER LETTER I told you of Louis Wolheim, he of the forbidding face and fine mind. When we reopened *The Jest* he gathered sufficient courage to play a small part, and having discovered that he could speak on the stage with no resultant terrestrial upheaval he soon found his stride. I later gave him a leading and difficult part in *The Idle Inn*. Soon after the Provincetown Players produced O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* and Wallie played Yank, the socially befuddled gorilla. Later I took the play over and brought it up to the Plymouth, where it had a successful run.

Wallie's great opportunity came with *What Price Glory?* One night while dining at the Brevoort Alexander Woollcott

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introduced me to a man with a new play. The man was Laurence Stallings and the play was *What Price Glory?* which he had written in collaboration with Maxwell Anderson. Stallings had seen bitter fighting in the war and emerged with a missing leg. As a substitute prop he had a fine and biting indignation against the stupidities of war. With Anderson's help he wrote the first play in which all glamor and romance were stripped from war. The play seemed to me such a bitter, uncompromising indictment that I doubted its chances for popularity. But it was a play that had to be produced. Wallie played Captain Flagg, prototype of Captain Case, Stallings' commanding officer in his company of the marines. Case, whose hardboiled, fearless, belligerent reputation had preceded him, came to a dress rehearsal. He was a slight, dapper, pink-cheeked man who lisped. My casting of Wallie was as far from the original as could be conceived. Case made little comment. He doubted if Flagg would wear decorations. In speaking of Stallings he said, "Stallings was brave but excitable. When we first smelled gas Stallings started to shout, 'Gas! Gas!' I said, 'Shut up

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you son-of-a-bitch.' He got one whiff of gas, and thought the war was over."

I asked Case to come to our opening. I set aside a box for him. He appeared about a half-hour late with a fellow marine officer. Obviously they had been dining. They were ushered to the box where they both promptly fell asleep, not to be awakened until pandemonium broke out at the end of the play. It was a great success. There were tirades against it, particularly from the Navy Department. There was talk of its being closed by the police. On one night patrol wagons were stationed in adjoining streets. The theater was to be raided and the company arrested. Technically, the arrest was to be based on the free use of profanity in the play. The district attorney stationed a police stenographer on the stage. I assembled the cast and told them to omit all profanity. I told them to play it profanely but not say it profanely.

The angriest agitator against the play was Admiral Plunkett, then in command of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. It was he who stirred up the city district attorney after failing to move United States District Attorney Colonel William

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Hayward, who had commanded New York's colored troops in the war and was undisturbed by the play's profanity. The steaming admiral was suddenly silenced, and I have always thought it was by the following letter which appeared in Heywood Broun's column in the *World*:

"You say you don't happen to know Admiral Plunkett," writes Texas Bill.

"Well, I do, or did. Crown me if I appear to boast.

"There was a branch of the late A. E. F. called the railway artillery reserve. It didn't do much, and I helped it. It was commanded by a General Chamberlaine. He was the only officer of either sex who wore a double Sam Browne belt in France. By double Sam Browne belt I mean a strap over each shoulder.

"General Chamberlaine was one of the old-school line officers who chewed cold iron and spit blue flame. I was a flunky of his at his Mailly-le-Camp headquarters. We were supposed to have long-range artillery mounted on railway trucks and to be a combat arm. We really had wooden saw-

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horses and castiron souvenirs of the Franco-Prussian War, and we at headquarters weren't combatants until Admiral Plunkett arrived.

"They sent us up some sixteen-inch rifles, dismounted from battleships and placed upon specially made railroad trucks as long and heavy as steamship docks. Navy personnel in khaki were included under Admiral Plunkett to handle the weapons. They were assigned to station in the auxiliary village of Houssamont, and the admiral and the general immediately fell to trying to decide which ranked the other.

"They never met personally. I was the go-between. Officially the general's messenger, my actual military duty was to take several of the most powerful swearings at each day from both principals.

"The general would send me winging with orders to that dash blank double ding donged flabby excuse for an admiral. I'd present them, with the general's compliments, and promptly he told me to go back to that triple asterisked, sextupled, exclamation pointed, two-starred and three-

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cometed dumbbell of a general and ask him where he got off issuing orders to an admiral, and to invite him with the admiral's compliments to do several very impossible things.

"Things came to a head one night when the admiral sent over word that he was tired of hanging around Houssamont. He was going to the front and do some shooting.

"What the general said we'll leave out, but what he did was to order your correspondent to take a detail of men over and lock the rail switches so the admiral couldn't haul his guns out of the park.

"What the admiral said we'll also pass up, but what he did was to send a detail of men down to cut the locks with cold chisels, and out he pulled—gun, crew, cars and all.

"With a defiant toot of the whistle he rattled off up the tracks. The general said thus and thus. It was terrible.

"After a day and night traveling forty miles to the front, the great gun arrived within range. Then, to his undelight, the admiral discovered that his gun was pointing the wrong way, and there wasn't a French turntable in all Flanders long enough and strong enough to accommodate it.

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"The admiral took a spraddle-legged stance about ten feet to the right of the rear truck and Oh! Oh! Oh!

"Listen, if Admiral Plunkett is shocked by the sorority-house language of *What Price Glory?* one of my greatest idols will be shattered.

"No matter how explosive the dialogue of Mr Stallings' piece may be, I'll bet a battleship to a biscuit that the admiral will leave in deep disgust at its girlishness about half through the second act."

Aside from Wallie's brutish, humorous and touching portrayal there were fine performances by William Boyd and a stageful of others. In some ways it was the most gratifying production I have made. I have always felt that *What Price Glory?* was responsible for unleashing a flood of gratuitous profanity on the stage in succeeding seasons. There were producers foolish enough to believe that its success was due to its profanity.

The success of the play resulted in a flood of moving pictures, treating war realistically rather than sentimentally,

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and there was a time when I believed that the far-reaching effects of this play and Sherriff's touching play, *Journey's End*, together with such books as *All Quiet on the Western Front*, would do much to lessen the war spirit in the world. I am less optimistic now.

Only recently I produced another indictment of war, Humphrey Cobb's shattering book, *Paths of Glory*, ably adapted by Sidney Howard. Its chief reaction seemed to be a disclosure of impotence, an "I know, but what can you do about it?" attitude. There was little of the fine, jeering indignation awakened by *What Price Glory*? The men who write propaganda still have greater influence than the dramatists and novelists. Political and religious leaders who sing the glories of blood and sacrifice are still nearer to the understanding of their people than poets who sing of brotherhood and love. The fight of the ideal against the real is made ever more difficult in a world faced with increasingly bitter realities. To the din of survival the voice of mercy is not attuned, nor that of wisdom. Need is a frantic counselor whose hysterical voice drowns out all others.

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Following *What Price Glory?* I did two plays by Anderson and Stallings, *First Flight* and *The Buccaneer*, both literate and distinguished. Anderson has steadily grown to the high place he now occupies in the theater. Stallings wrapped up his gifts in celluloid and is now wound around a newsreel.

Both Stallings and Anderson were newspapermen as were Don Marquis, Alexander Woollcott, George S. Kaufman, Sidney Howard, Charles MacArthur and Robert E. Sherwood, with whom I have also been associated in production. There was also Sophie Treadwell, a newspaperwoman. There is no better training for dramatic writing than newspaper work. The good reporter is a natural dramatist. He sees life, and writes of it in playing terms. Reporters are the easiest of people to work with as they have been accustomed to editorial supervision. They do not look upon their words as holy. For that matter I have yet to meet a difficult or unreasonable dramatist. I have heard of terrific fights in which the dramatist was barred from rehearsals because of his unwarranted protests or his unyielding resistance to

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change. Not knowing the facts, but knowing the stupidities which dramatists sometimes encounter, my inclination is to believe that in most of these cases it is not the dramatist who is the offender. I have heard producers claim that they made plays, but I have yet to hear one say that he hurt a play. I have seen the faulty handling of scripts with which I was familiar. I, myself, have done my share. All good ideas do not come off. No one is invariably right. Doctors bury their mistakes. Producers send theirs to the storehouse. There is a difference, however, in that the doctor collects a bill while the producer has to pay one.

While in Cannes one winter I met Philip Barry who was then at the beginning of his playwriting career. He told me of a play on which he was working that sounded interesting. Later the play came, and I accepted it. It was *In a Garden*, which I produced with Laurette Taylor, in some ways an incomparable actress. The play, one of real distinction, revealed Barry in a sensitive and searching mood, a mood he was later to alternate with his bright gift of straight comedy. Between these moods he has since been torn, enjoying the

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fruits of such successes as *Paris Bound* and *Holiday*, which I later produced, but yearning for the popular acceptance of plays nearer his heart, *White Wings*, *John*, *Hotel Universe*, *The Joyous Season*, *Bright Star*. The great success of his comedies has been a handicap to his more serious work. Audiences look to him for laughter, an equally valuable service to the theater which Barry underestimates. With no concealment he might write under two names so audiences in advance would know what to expect.

In a Garden had a fair run, and I became friends with the endlessly amusing Laurette. Once, in speaking of a leading actor, she said, "Whenever his wife complains too much he stops her mouth with another baby." This is the technique since adopted by dictators who hang up prizes for large families. Pregnant women are not likely to become disgruntled with political conditions. Dictators know how troublesome aroused women can be.

When arranging to produce *Paris Bound* Barry brought in a society girl who had done some successful work with the Amateur Comedy Club. She was an odd personality, exactly

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suiting to a part in the play. I urged her to try it, but she decided not to. We rehearsed several actresses in the part, but I could not get the strange girl, with the baseball player's walk, out of mind. I urged Barry to try again. The second time she accepted, and on the opening was an instantaneous success. I advised Barry to write a play for her. He did, and the result was *Holiday*, in which she played the lead to the delight of all who saw her and the chagrin of experienced actresses who just knew that that woman couldn't act at all. Her name was Hope Williams.

In the same season two other newcomers appeared, and oddly enough I saw them both under the same circumstances. Each was appearing in a play in Great Neck, prior to New York, and each was being let out because of incompetence. One was Katherine Hepburn, the other Zita Johann. I gave Miss Hepburn a part in *These Days*, and her unusual quality at once registered. Following this I gave her the understudy to Hope Williams in *Holiday*. I always remember her watching rehearsals perched on a very high electrician's stepladder, and wondering what the crash

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would be like when she fell. I had the ladder taken away.

Zita Johann I put into the lead of Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal*, a beautiful, imaginative play which had a rhythmic, moving insistence entirely new to the theater. For this production Bobby Jones conceived a new and effective form of presentation that greatly heightened the simple majesty of the play.

Zita justified all the promise I had seen in that one performance, and later showed even fuller development in Barry's *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*. And now both of these girls, so needful to the theater, are in Hollywood.

In *Machinal* there was an actor who came from California. He had played in stock companies and had tried unsuccessfully to get into the movies. He had decided to try New York. I gave him the lead, opposite Miss Johann. He played it beautifully. His name was Clark Gable.

Not long after another California stranger came into the office. He had been playing in stock for years, but had been unable even to get extra work in the movies. He had saved up his money every year for fourteen years to make a trip

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to New York to find an engagement. Each year he failed, and returned to stock. He was a middle-aged man in a rather bedraggled Palm Beach suit. He didn't look promising, but something persuaded me to try him in a play I was then rehearsing, *Torch Song*. On the first reading he was obviously suited. The part was built up, and he was the success of the play. He was Guy Kibbee.

Once Lawrence Weber sent me a play called *Burlesque*, by an unknown author. The play was obviously the work of an amateur and was pretty much of a muddle. However, I was caught by the two central characters, a burlesque comedian and his soubrette wife. I sent for the author, and discussed the play at length. The first difficulty was that there was no second act. I finally outlined an act in my mind and went over it carefully with the new author, George Watters. He came back in a few days with something entirely different. I outlined it again, and again he came back with a different act. After this experience had been repeated to the point of monotony I had about decided to give up the play as hopeless when it occurred to me that if I knew the act so

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well I should write it. This I did. I sent for Watters, told him that I thought he needed a collaborator. I told him I had had the act written for me, and if he liked it and wanted the collaborator's help he could have it. He was anxious to know who had done the work, but I refused to tell him, as I wanted him to feel free to reject it. He read the act, was enthusiastic, and wanted to meet the collaborator at once. I introduced myself. We made our arrangement. I rewrote the first and third acts, and then began a search for the principals, two parts not easily filled, as they required actors who could play comedy and pathos and sing and dance. For the man I engaged Hal Skelly, a musical-comedy comedian. He had had little experience in plays but he had an engaging, lovable quality which was essential to the part of the burlesque comic. After some search for the girl I interviewed a night-club dancer who had just scored in a small emotional part in a play that did not run. She seemed to have the quality I wanted, a sort of rough poignancy. I engaged her. She at once displayed more sensitive, easily expressed emotion than I had encountered since Pauline Lord. She and

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Skelly were the perfect team, and they made the play a great success. I had great plans for her, but the Hollywood offers kept coming. There was no competing with them. She became a picture star. She is Barbara Stanwyck.

You can see that it is not the opposition of the motion-picture theaters that has made the greatest difficulty for the play producers. It is the heavy drain on proven talent, not easily replaced.

Next Saturday we will be with you, Chappel, Lehman and the Arion Quartet. We shall hear your three songs played for the first time. Dr Tanner and the nurses will be with us. I have been looking forward to this for weeks. Until Saturday.

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